



Examples of COVID-19 Impact Statements

This brief includes examples of how faculty members can strategically describe the impact of COVID-19 on their teaching, service, research, scholarship, and/or creative activities. The two primary mechanisms by which UMD faculty members can describe the impact of COVID-19 on their work are in faculty activities reporting (Faculty Success)¹ and in optional COVID-19 Impact Statements submitted in promotion materials².

The point of explaining COVID-19 impacts is to highlight new or ongoing invisible labor and to show how a faculty member's research, teaching, and service changed, in quality and quantity, in ways that are not typically recorded on a CV. Making this visible and offering contextual information may be useful to the faculty member. No one is required to offer personal narratives or supplemental information they suspect will disadvantage them. Every faculty member will decide whether to provide this optional information in the system, to keep track of it elsewhere (in case a unit head asks later), or not to compile it at all. The intent is not to force unwanted work on any faculty but rather to enable people to record in an ongoing strategic way their activities, again, including activities not included on a CV.

Examples of new, alternative, or extra effort in teaching, service, and research/scholarship/creative activities

Research

- As a PTK faculty member working in a lab, I coordinated my lab's staff planning for return to campus in July 2020, which included approximately 40 hours spent creating safety protocols, attending safety training, developing a lab rotation, procuring supplies, and setting up the space with COVID-19 safety precautions in mind. I disseminated this information to all lab personnel, including 1 postdoc, 3 staff members, and three graduate students. These protocols were subsequently adopted by two other units in my college.
- Within my lab, from March 2020 to December 2020, I organized monthly online trivia competitions on historical and contemporary topics relevant to my field to foster a greater sense of community among lab staff. These meetings included two postdocs, 4 doctoral research assistants, and 4 undergraduate researchers and involved approximately 2 hours per month in preparation or in the actual meeting.
- I had already received IRB approval for conducting ethnographic research in Brazil, but could not travel, and the community I planned to study had little computer or internet access. I therefore spent five months exploring "studying up" methodology and doing preliminary research and writing on international NGOs engaged in protecting rainforests; got IRB approval for the new project, and have done pilot interviews, via Zoom, with six activists and policy-makers.

Service

- I served on the department's newly created caregiving committee, which met once a week for 12 weeks to discuss accommodations that could be made within the department related to the extra burden to faculty and staff in caregiving roles during the pandemic.

¹ <https://faculty.umd.edu/activity>

² View the guidance from OFA on COVID-19 Impact Statements Here: <https://faculty.umd.edu/node/2015>



ADVANCE PROGRAM FOR INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE

- As the director for undergraduate studies, I led the transition of all campus visits to the virtual environment, including training 10 undergraduate student ambassadors on how to host virtual campus visits for incoming students.
- I facilitated 3 departmental listening sessions on the climate for Black students in May and June of this year after the protests for racial justice. I have subsequently hosted two Zoom sessions from noted diversity, equity, and inclusion experts in our field to give department members strategies for enhancing DEI in their classrooms.

Teaching

- In fall 2020, I taught ADVN101, which enrolled 25 undergraduate students. Typically, I would have had in-person office hours for a total of four hours per week. As a result of the pandemic, I have made myself available for Zoom consultations with students approximately ten hours a week, thereby increasing my “in-person” hours with students by 150% this semester.
- In summer 2020, I supervised 3 graduate student independent studies in a hybrid modality, primarily as a way to ensure that they met the criteria for in-person credit hours. I met with them for two hours each week to supervise and advise on the creation of a study using extant data because they were unable to conduct research in the lab. Students in this independent study conducted a group research project that examined diversity of the field using extant data (e.g., Department of Education statistics, reports from disciplinary associations). They presented their findings at our national association’s meeting in November.
- I participated in 5 workshops through my professional association and the National Academies for Science, Engineering, and Medicine related to inclusive pedagogy and high-quality teaching in the virtual environment. I participated in five college-wide sessions on strategies for online engagement, and I led a sixth session in use of clickers to liven up Zoom sessions.
- I attended four Office of Diversity and Inclusion anti-racism workshops and subsequently adopted several practices within my classroom: (1) I conducted a diversity audit of the authors on the syllabus for ADVN305 and, having observed the underrepresentation of BIPOC authors, I adjusted the syllabus to include a diversity of scholars; (2) I shifted two assignments that had previously been multiple choice exams to assignments based upon the principles of labor-based grading; (3) I implemented a statement of mutual expectations for students and instructors. This document articulates the shared principles that all members of the classroom agreed upon (e.g., mutual respect, emphasis on community, expectations for timely communication).
- As a PTK instructional faculty member, I usually teach three sections a semester, with 30 students per section. After my department determined that the nature of the class made online teaching of that many students simultaneously impossible. At my department chair’s request, I agreed to teach six sections with 15 students each, so although the amount of grading was the same, I spent twice as many hours in actual class meetings. One section was early in the morning, to accommodate students in Asia, and one section was at night, to accommodate students who had to share computers with younger siblings and/or parents also learning/working from home.

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Mentoring/Advising

- As the only Latina faculty member in the department, I serve as an informal advisor to additional 5 Latinx undergraduate students who have sought mentorship. I meet with them as a group once a semester (previously in person, but now via zoom) and have 1-2 meetings with each student per semester as requested, to give advice on career and professional development.
- As an advisor, I held once monthly graduate student happy hours via zoom from March 2020 -- December 2020 (approximately 20 hours). These meetings included 4 master's students and 5 doctoral students.
- Several of my advisees have reported significant mental health and/or financial need as a result of the pandemic. I have increased the frequency at which I am available for one-on-one check ins with my advisees, meeting with each doctoral student (4) on a bi-weekly basis (compared to once a semester before the pandemic). I additionally consulted with the campus counseling center regarding resources available to students.

Examples of COVID-19 Impact Statements

Impact of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Work

In the wake of the protests for racial justice, I led several informal meetings of graduate and undergraduate students to discuss the diversity climate in the department, college, and university at large. I had 5 one-on-one discussions and three large group meetings. I communicated feedback to our department chair and, with two faculty colleagues, two graduate students, and four undergraduates, formed the departmental equity task force. We have drafted a statement of our commitments to anti racism in the department and subsequently held a departmental town hall regarding the diversity, equity, and inclusion climate in the department. We have contracted a graduate student to conduct a climate survey; our committee will use the results to assess best next steps.

Impact of COVID-19 on Research

My lab was closed from March to May 2020, when typically, I would have been running experiments. Instead, I investigated several federal grant possibilities, and ultimately I applied for two grants of \$500,000 each. I have already learned that I won one grant, and the second application was approved to move on to the second stage of peer review. I anticipate hearing the second decision in March 2021. My three school-age children were in school from home, so I did my grading, writing, and data analysis at night. Over the late summer and fall, I submitted three papers to top journals in my field. Ordinarily, peer reviews for these journals take two or three months, but because peer reviewers themselves are very busy, all three editors have said that the peer review process will take five to six months.

Adapting Grant or Programs to the COVID-19 Context

I oversaw the transition of all grant-sponsored educational programs (parental engagement workshops, teacher professional development) that were intended to be delivered in person to the online environment. Successfully

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transitioning all of our curriculum to an online platform included developing a new, web-based interactive curriculum that enhanced parent efficacy in facilitating student literacy at home and a three-part workshop for teachers about fostering positive interactions with parents in the virtual learning environment. Initial evaluation results indicate that the online intervention has been successful, with participants reporting a 10% increase pre to post in their efficacy. Although we saw some program attrition, overall, the results indicate that extra effort in this area brought positive results.

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