

Memo to Faculty

COVID-19 Pandemic Scholarship and Service

September 29, 2020

Western Oregon University (“WOU”) recognizes that during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic it is operating in a distressed situation. In light of this and in order to continue serving University students and functioning as a higher education institution, it has been and will continue to be necessary to make adaptations to certain functions and operations throughout the University.

The University has and will continue to take measures to support faculty efforts to deliver courses online or remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic. This letter is intended to provide context to the totality of work that each faculty member is providing during the COVID-19 pandemic.

During the pandemic, faculty members have been asked to focus more on the critical task at hand—that of serving the immediate instruction, educational and advising needs of our students. Pursuant to a Letter of Agreement between WOU and Western Oregon University Federation of Teachers (“WOUFT”) dated September 24, 2020, WOU will make the following adaptations in considering faculty performance during the COVID-19 crisis:

- 1) Although the overall level of accomplishment and achievement necessary for promotion or tenure have not been diminished, WOU recognizes we may need to reduce emphasis on scholarly output and possibly some service commitments, with the exception of advising;
- 2) For purposes of future reappointment, tenure, promotion and post-tenure reviews, the unique circumstances presented by the COVID-19 pandemic will be considered by all PRC-related reviewing bodies in determining whether faculty have met expectations during this period;
- 3) Faculty work adapting courses for remote and online delivery may be considered by the University and its relevant reviewing bodies as service to the University;
- 4) Faculty with more remote and online delivery expertise who help and provide mentorship to faculty with less experience with the modality will have that work be considered valuable institutional service during the pandemic;
- 5) The Student Course Evaluation Instrument (SCEI) during the period of remote and online instruction due to the pandemic will not be used for evaluative

purposes unless the individual faculty member elects to use it in which case the faculty member should include the data in their PRC materials.

6) At faculty option, tenure-track faculty may request a one or two-year stoppage of their tenure clock due to COVID-19 related impacts. Approval of such request from the Division Chair, appropriate dean and Provost will not be unreasonably withheld. Note the two-year stoppage is only available for tenure track faculty who started their tenure track positions September 2019 or earlier, tenure track faculty who started this fall will have the option of a one-year stoppage of their tenure clock.

7. Classroom observations originally scheduled for Fall 2020 will be postponed until the next possible term, unless the instructing faculty member requests that their course be observed at the scheduled time.

Lastly, I am grateful for our talented and resourceful faculty. Through hard work, flexibility and creative problems solving we will get through this and our students will continue to meet course goals and program learning outcomes.



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