

As a follow-up to the Provost's October 29 memos on UGFA member workload during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Provost and the UGFA decided to issue this joint memo to provide further detail on some of the solutions the Provost has suggested.

First, we wanted to remind you of some of the provisions of the COVID-19 Letter of Understanding between the University and the Faculty Association. We agreed upon these provisions in recognition of the additional burdens the current extraordinary circumstances place on faculty, veterinarians, and librarians.

Decisions about how best to temporarily adapt course instruction to remote instruction are at the discretion of the faculty member. These decisions include how to deliver course materials and how to assess students, and they will have an impact on your workload, and therefore on your well-being. The same holds true for librarian and veterinarian members who are engaged in remote instruction.

During the fall 2022 review cycle, Tenure and Promotion Committee and Continuing Appointment Committee members will be instructed to take into account the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on productivity. Members will have the opportunity to appeal overall ratings of "Good" or "Very Good" if they believe the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic were not sufficiently taken into consideration by the Committee. In addition, the Collective Agreement allows appeals for any reason by tenure-track faculty and continuing-appointment veterinarians and librarians for any rating, and by all members for a less than "Good" overall rating.

Furthermore, we want to tell faculty that they may explore a temporary adjustment of their DOE to account for the increased effort that teaching might require under the current circumstances, and that requests for such temporary adjustments will be seriously considered. For example, through discussion and upon agreement with their Dean, a faculty member might be able to drop non-essential service commitments and temporarily shift that effort to the teaching they are already doing, with that shift in effort reflected in their DOE. In one scenario, in which a DOE of 40/40/20 includes teaching 4 courses, the DOE might be changed to 50/40/10, with 50 representing the work of teaching 4 courses. As another example, due to the pandemic's negative impact on the feasibility of travel and on field work and lab operations, etc., a faculty member may wish to shift temporarily some effort from scholarship to teaching in their DOE, with a change from 40/40/20 to 50/30/20. In both of these examples, no additional teaching duties would be assigned, as the percentage increase in teaching recognizes the increased effort required to deliver the currently-assigned teaching in the pandemic environment. Post pandemic, a DOE that had been changed to relieve pressures related to COVID-19 would revert to what it had been before. Similarly, librarians may also wish to seek an adjustment of their DOE, and veterinarian members may wish to seek an adjustment of their distribution of responsibilities.

Our collective agreement does allow for a reduced workload for reduced pay. In this COVID-19 environment, a reduction in teaching effort alone rather than a proportional DOE reduction is

possible. Faculty members considering this should reach out to the Association and their Dean to ensure that they are aware of all other options before taking a reduction in pay.

The COVID-19 LOU recognizes that faculty, veterinarians, and librarians are working as hard and as well as they can and that to expect the same degree of productivity under the current circumstances would be both unfair and counter-productive. Both the Faculty Association and the University care about the mental health and well-being of faculty, veterinarians, and librarians and we want to help ensure that you are able to retain a degree of joy in your work and balance in your life even under these challenging circumstances. If there is something that we can do to relieve some of the pressure you're feeling, please reach out to the Faculty Association, your Chair, your Dean, and/or your Manager.



Mary DeCoste, UGFA President



Gwen Chapman, Interim Provost and Vice-President (Academic)