

Important Update for Faculty from MSCA Chapter President and Provost

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Dear Faculty, Department Chairs, and Deans,

We write to highlight agreements made by the Employee Relations Committee regarding important processes and dates in light of the COVID-19 disruption. We encourage you to visit the statewide MSCA website and review the full notes (<https://mscaunion.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/ERC-Minutes-on-COVID-19-Discussion.pdf>).

Of critical note at this time are the following agreements:

Student evaluations for Spring 2020

Response: The Committee agreed student evaluations will not be conducted for day Spring 2020 courses, and as a result faculty will be held harmless for the lack of student evaluations for the Spring 2020 semester. For DGCE courses, student evaluations will be conducted only for courses that were scheduled to be instructed in an online modality, and as a result faculty who were not required to have student evaluations conducted for the Spring 2020 instructional period will be held harmless.

Classroom observations for Spring 2020 semester

Response: Classroom observations will not be conducted in the day program.

Department chair elections

Response: The Committee does not endorse extending the time for elections. The Department should conduct the election electronically by a process it determines.

Personnel deadlines/response deadlines

Response: The Committee saw no need to alter existing deadlines for personnel actions. [This means evaluation for tenure, promotion, PTR will continue to move through the process and faculty will be notified on time of the decisions. It also means all notifications for actions for next academic year will remain the same as contractual guidelines.]

Post-Tenure Review deadline of April 1, 2020

Response: The Committee saw no reason to alter the PTR calendar.

Virtual governance committee meetings

Response: The Committee agrees virtual committee meetings are positive and necessary, and are suitable for governance meetings.

A final note we wish to highlight concerns access to offices during the COVID-19 disruption.

Access to faculty/librarian offices

Response: The Provosts explained the process in effect at their campuses. Permission or notice is required for a unit member to be on campus at this time at some universities and faculty at those universities have been informed.

We are assuming at this time that many of you have gathered needed materials from campus to support your work. We recognize that in the coming weeks, some of you may have to enter your office or lab to retrieve an item or two that you may have forgotten that you need. We ask at this time that if you need to come to campus to access either your office or other area on campus, to provide advance notice to your college dean so that this information can be brought to the attention of facilities. Each time we enter the campus, staff work to be sure that the areas we have occupied and adjacent areas (e.g., restrooms) are disinfected.

As our campus continues to come together to support our students and each other in this challenging environment, we thank you for your enormous effort to rework your curriculum, retool your pedagogical strategies, and embrace new channels of communication. We also salute your valiant efforts to support students and each other during this difficult time.

Wishing you and your family good health.

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