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Cordes Chair Presentation: COVID Impact Statements in the Annual Evaluation Process

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COVID Impact Statements in the Annual Evaluation Process

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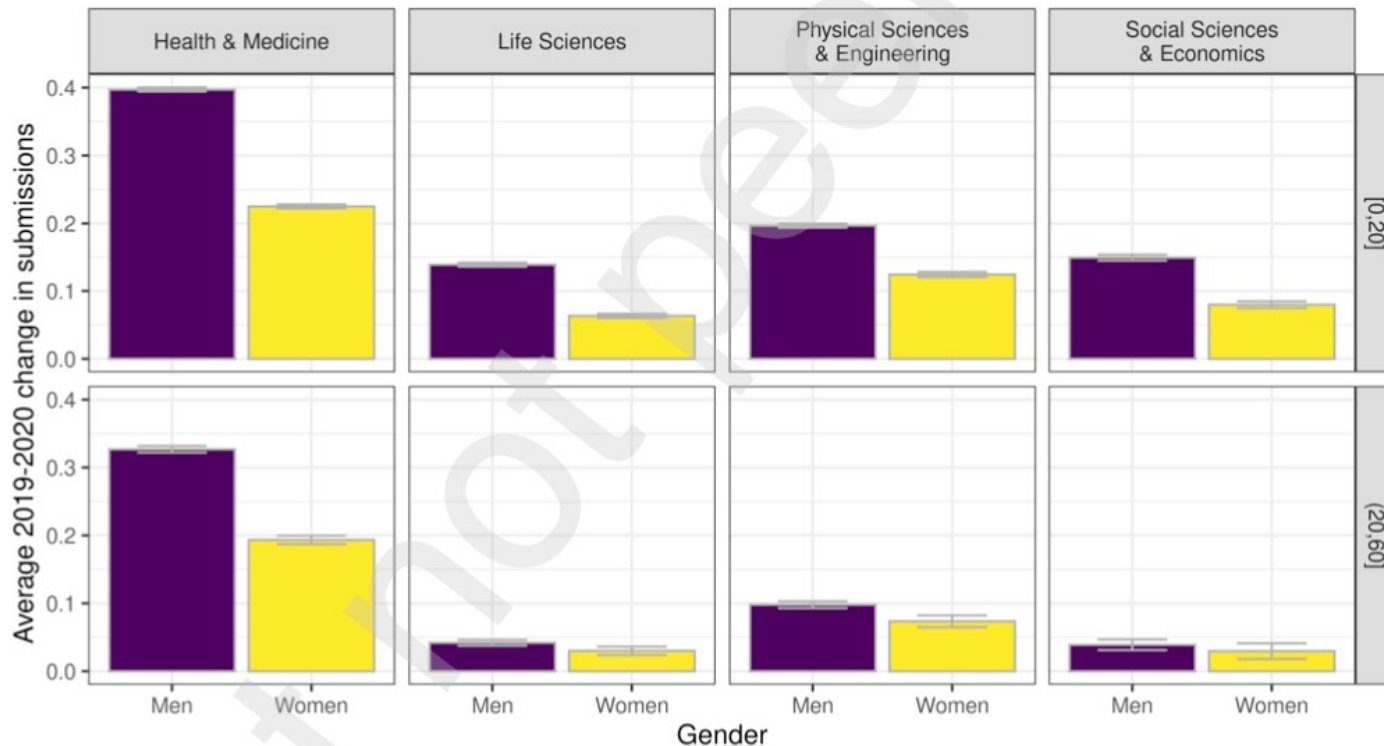


Understanding the Impact of the COVID Pandemic is Important

- [Could the Pandemic Prompt an ‘Epidemic of Loss’ of Women in the Sciences?](#)
 - New York Times, April 13, 2021, Apoorva Mandavilli
 - “The confluence of all of these factors creates this perfect storm. People are at their breaking point,” said Michelle Cardel, an obesity researcher at the University of Florida. “My big fear is that we are going to have a secondary epidemic of loss, particularly of early career women in STEM.”
- Documenting the effects facilitates understanding



What are some of the effects?



“Our complete data on all Elsevier journals indicate that women submitted fewer manuscripts than men during the first wave of the pandemic in early 2020. This has been especially prominent in the research area where the academic production has been higher during the pandemic, i.e., health & medicine. Our findings suggest that younger cohorts of women academics were penalised the most.”

Figure 2: Average change in submissions by research area and age, the latter variable including authors in the first cohort (≤ 20 years from their first publication) in the first group with older authors in the second. Bars represent standard errors.

- Squazzoni, Flaminio and Bravo, Giangiacomo and Grimaldo, Francisco and Garcia-Costa, Daniel and Farjam, Mike and Mehmani, Bahar, Only Second-Class Tickets for Women in the COVID-19 Race. A Study on Manuscript Submissions and Reviews in 2329 Elsevier Journals (October 16, 2020). Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3712813>



What are some of the effects?

- Cui, Ruomeng, Hao Ding, and Feng Zhu. "[Gender Inequality in Research Productivity During the COVID-19 Pandemic.](#)" *Manufacturing & Service Operations Management* (forthcoming).
 - Our results indicate that, in the 10 weeks after the lockdown in the United States, although total research productivity increased by 35 percent, female academics' productivity dropped by 13.2 percent relative to that of male academics.
 - We also show that this intensified productivity gap is more pronounced for assistant professors and for academics in top-ranked universities and is found in six other countries.
 - Our work points out the fairness issue in productivity caused by the lockdown, a finding that universities will find helpful when evaluating faculty productivity. It also helps organizations realize the potential unintended consequences that can arise from telecommuting.



What is a COVID Impact Statement?

- Generally, speaking...
 - A COVID Impact Statement is an optional statement that faculty can include in their performance review materials.
 - The statement should briefly document the effects that the COVID-19 pandemic has directly had on faculty workload and professional opportunities and the resulting impact on faculty productivity, performance and trajectory.
 - It is important to note that impacts can be positive or negative.



What is the purpose of a COVID Impact Statement?

- The Statement provides reviewers information that they need to perform a fair, contextualized evaluation of the faculty member's professional performance and contributions.
 - The COVID Impact Statement is an opportunity for faculty to describe both positive and detrimental effects of the pandemic on the mix or balance of their work activities and the types of work outcomes that they were able to achieve.
 - Evaluators are asked to consider these impacts as they apply departmental and college standards in faculty evaluation processes.
 - Evaluators are also asked to recognize the individualized impacts of COVID and **avoid universalizing** these statements; for example, the same factor that presented an opportunity for one candidate may have presented a hardship for another.
 - Source:
 - <https://provost.ncsu.edu/faculty-resources/faculty-evaluation-and-covid-19/>



What are some best practices when writing an impact statement?

- [UMass Amherst, ADVANCE Program](#)
 - Documenting Pandemic Impacts: Best Practices. (2020). University of Massachusetts, Amherst.
- Susan Bulkeley Butler Center for Leadership Excellence
 - [BEST PRACTICES TOOL Documenting the Impact of COVID-19 on Faculty \(tenure track/tenured\)](#)
- Be as specific as possible
 - You are trying to educate the reviewer about your context.
 - An important goal is to make relevant but potentially invisible impacts visible.



Possible Ideas from UMass Article

- Identify scope of work during the pandemic. If granted “essential worker” status, what work did it apply to, and what new work was added.
- Document changes to courses, including moving courses online and new technologies. Faculty may identify how many additional hours each week focused on teaching to concretize these effects (e.g., 15-hour/week workload for X course shifted to 30-hour/week workload for 7 weeks).
- Point out specific challenges, such as lack of resources (high-speed broadband, software) for faculty and students, and trainings attended or led.
- Identify additional teaching responsibilities, including course overloads due to personnel changes, retirements, issues with teaching assistants, assisting others with technology, other workload changes.
- Address how advising changed, particularly as students navigated changing requirements. Identify any increases in advising load. Mention any additional support for students experiencing physical and or mental health, economic, and social consequences of the pandemic.



Possible Ideas from UMass Article

- Document mentoring impacts, including student progress, and additional mentoring time required with students/peers facing pandemic impacts.
- List attending/leading meetings, additional efforts made – any work that would not have occurred during a regular semester. List efforts to move meetings/events online e.g. commencement.
- List additional work needed to develop plans for closing and re-opening of laboratories, including: coordination among research teams, development of cleaning and distancing protocols in the laboratory space, etc.
- Identify contributions to any department, university, professional society, interdisciplinary, or community- engaged pandemic initiative.



Possible Ideas from UMass Article

- Identify how research or creative work was disrupted. For example, faculty might note loss of:
 - Research time due to increased or changed teaching and service responsibilities
 - Sabbatical time, other paid or unpaid leave (Fulbright, Guggenheim, etc.)
 - If willing, research time due to health issues or caregiving responsibilities
 - **Access to necessary research facilities/labs/** computing resources (including impacts on longitudinal research), studios, or venues for creative works/performances
 - **Access to research subjects**, animals, cell cultures (including for longitudinal research)
 - Additional time and resources spent to restart research, which varies by field
 - **Travel and field research opportunities**
 - Funding to support personnel due to travel and visa restrictions or due to research restrictions
 - Access to internal or external research funds



Possible Ideas from UMass Article

- Faculty should further note other kinds of impacts:
 - Additional teaching/preparations
 - Cancellations of seminars, presentations, visits with collaborators or research teams
 - Challenges due to **increased time for review** of submissions for funding or publication
 - Redirected funding for COVID-19 related topics
 - Pivoting/changing research agenda due to pandemic restrictions
 - Diversion of funds for PPE
 - Donation of supplies or personnel time to COVID-19 initiatives
 - Challenges due to travel/visa restrictions



Should you write a COVID Impact Statement?

- COVID Impact Statements are optional.
 - The absence or submission of a statement should not be used for or against faculty during the evaluation process.
- As with any professional challenges that faculty might experience, faculty should still document the challenges and how they were handled and plans for how they will be overcome in order to contextualize the faculty members' records.
 - Besides providing quantitative measures a well-developed faculty dossier (e. g. P & T document) should provide review committees the context for the evaluation.



Breakout Session (20 minutes)

- Be sure to introduce yourselves.
- Working with your group identify and share one concrete impact (positive or negative) that the COVID pandemic had on your teaching, research, or service productivity.
- Be willing to share an impact with the larger group after the breakout session.



Sharing

- Share your group's impact
- OR
- Share your key take-away from today's session



Some References and Important Sources

- Cui, Ruomeng, Hao Ding, and Feng Zhu. "[Gender Inequality in Research Productivity During the COVID-19 Pandemic.](#)" *Manufacturing & Service Operations Management* (forthcoming).
- Squazzoni, Flaminio and Bravo, Giangiacomo and Grimaldo, Francisco and Garcia-Costa, Daniel and Farjam, Mike and Mehmani, Bahar, Only Second-Class Tickets for Women in the COVID-19 Race. A Study on Manuscript Submissions and Reviews in 2329 Elsevier Journals (October 16, 2020). Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3712813> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3712813>
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- Cardel MI, Dean N, Montoya-Williams D. Preventing a Secondary Epidemic of Lost Early Career Scientists. Effects of COVID-19 Pandemic on Women with Children. *Ann Am Thorac Soc*. 2020 Nov;17(11):1366-1370. doi: 10.1513/AnnalsATS.202006-589IP. PMID: 32667850; PMCID: PMC7640734.