

Memorandum of Agreement
Evaluation of Faculty and Librarians in the Time of COVID-19

Recognizing that the COVID-19 pandemic has, and will continue to, impact the progress of pre-tenure faculty and librarians, this agreement provides for relief and clarity in the evaluation process established in the local agreement on the [Evaluation of Faculty and Library Faculty for Tenure, Reappointment, Promotion and Range Adjustment \(2015\)](#), which will heretofore referred to as the 2015 Evaluation Agreement.

I. Delay in Reconsideration for Tenure in 2020-2021

- A. All tenured-track faculty and librarians who, as of May 30, 2020, are eligible for a reconsideration of tenure in their sixth year under the Agreement [Evaluation of Faculty and Library Faculty for Tenure, Reappointment, Promotion and Range Adjustment](#), will receive an extension due to circumstances specific to the COVID-19 pandemic. Faculty intending to seek reconsideration must notify their Dean by September 11, 2020. The application process for reconsideration will follow a new evaluation cycle on the 2020-2021 Personnel Calendar. Files will close on November 24, 2020. Program Review Committee reviews are due by December 8, 2020; Dean reviews are due by December 15, 2020; the Faculty Review Committee reviews are due by January 3, 2021; the Provost review is due by January 19, 2021; and the President review is due by January 26, 2021.
- B. The Master Agreement requires that Faculty who opt for the extension must be notified by the University on or by February 1st of their impending non-reappointment as of June 30, 2021; therefore, the delayed reconsideration process will be completed by February 1st, at which time faculty will be given notice of success in reconsideration for tenure and/or promotion or non-reappointment according to the normal process.

II. Faculty Plan. Faculty Plans are in Section IV.C. of the 2015 Evaluation Agreement.

- A. **Reasons to Change a Faculty Plan:** Existing criteria to change a Faculty Plan allows for the COVID-19 pandemic, as demonstrated below in the list of factors in Section IV.C.1:
 - 1. The nature of one's work before one's original appointment at the University
 - 2. Particular contractual obligations, including those in the initial appointment
 - 3. Previous evaluations at various levels of review
 - 4. Approved changes in earlier plans
 - 5. New challenges and opportunities

- B. Process to Revise a Faculty Plan:** For Faculty in years 4 and 5, this will follow the normal process, and they can now be done up until the time of their initial tenure file submission in January for those in their 5th year, and for up to one-year for those in their 4th year. This modifies the “Year 3” requirement for revisions in Section IV.C.4: “In response to new opportunities or unexpected challenges, Probationary faculty may propose revisions of their Plans and seek approval through the process described above during Year 3.” The process for revision remains the same under Section IV.C.3.c.

III. Standards

- A. Program, School, and University standards continue to be the sole criteria for tenure and promotion, pursuant to Section I.C. of the 2015 Evaluation Agreement and consistent with Section 5.2 of [University Policy II-10.5: Faculty Evaluation Policy](#).**

- B. Review of Program Standards:** Section I.C. allows for the Review and Revision of Standards every five years, either during or immediately after the regular 5-year program review process (except for accredited programs, whose reviews take place concurrently with accreditation reviews, and may occur less frequently than every 5 years, based on the accrediting body’s review schedule), and provides the option for additional reviews to be undertaken when necessitated by changed School or University Standards or as agreed to by the University and the SFT.

1. Programs can now go back and review their program standards and propose revisions within the next two years of the signing of this agreement, outside of the five-year review process, if they choose to do so. The process of revising Program Standards will remain the same, pursuant to Section 1.C. of the Evaluation Agreement and consistent with Section 5.2 of [University Policy II-10.5: Faculty Evaluation Policy](#).

C. Evaluation of Standards:

1. All levels of review will consider the COVID-19 pandemic, and its impact on the file.

a) Teaching:

- (1) Peer Observations: For the 2019-2020 academic year, the number requirement is waived for faculty who did not complete peer observations in Fall 2019 or pre-COVID-19 closure in Spring 2020. If faculty completed peer observations before the first date of a COVID-19 closure in

Spring 2020, then they may include those in their file using the normal process.

- (2) All faculty and librarians who taught a class in Spring of 2020 were required to deploy IDEA teaching evaluations through the normal requirements and processes. Employees may decide at any time whether they want to include any, all, or none of their IDEA Observations for Spring of 2020 in their files, up to the point at which they submit a file for tenure and promotion or other formal review (e.g., five-year review). This choice must be noted and explained in the file.
 - (3) The absence of any or all IDEA teaching evaluations and Peer Observations in a file, as specified in sub-sections 1 and 2 above, shall not be held against any faculty applying for tenure and/or promotion or undergoing a five-year review. Faculty are still required to submit evidence demonstrating they meet or exceed standards for teaching.
 - b) Scholarly Activity: In evaluating Program, School, and University standards for scholarly activity, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic will be taken into consideration at every level of review.
 - c) Service: In evaluating Program, School, and University standards for service, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic will be taken into consideration at every level of review.
2. The coupling of tenure and promotion: It is University policy under [Policy II-10.5: Faculty Evaluation Policy](#) in Section 4.1 that the University will “determine whether a faculty member should be reappointed, tenured, or promoted.” Further, Section 9.5.5. states that: “Assistant Professors normally receive promotion to the rank of Associate Professor concurrent with their reappointment with tenure, unless there are unusual circumstances in the individual tenure/promotion situation.” Such unusual circumstances include but are not limited to those noted in 5.1 of the same policy.
- a) Among other circumstances that might warrant the decoupling of tenure and promotion in the review process at any and all levels, we agree to consider the COVID-19 pandemic, provided the faculty plan is updated accordingly prior to submission of tenure file, pursuant to Section II of this Agreement and evidence to support disruption of the scholarly/creative agenda due to COVID-19 is included in the file.
 - b) All faculty wishing to be considered for tenure decoupled from promotion due to circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic will need to demonstrate that they meet or exceed standards in teaching and service and that they are deemed likely

to meet the standards for promotion in the area of scholarship/creative activity in the near future.

- c) Pursuant to the 2015 Evaluation Agreement, "all evaluators will [continue to] provide separate recommendations on tenure and promotion."

TERM

This agreement shall remain in full force and effect from this date until June 30, 2026.

IN WITNESS THEREOF, the University and the Stockton Federation of Teachers have caused this letter of agreement to be executed on this 3 day of September, 2020.

For Stockton University

For the Stockton Federation of Teachers



Harvey Kesselman, President



Rodger L. Jackson, President