

2021

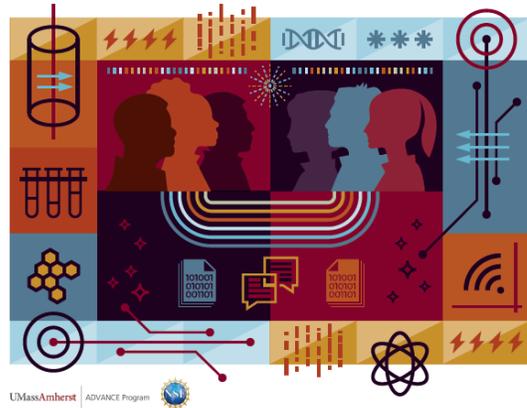
Pandemic Impact Statement Template

University of Massachusetts Amherst ADVANCE Program

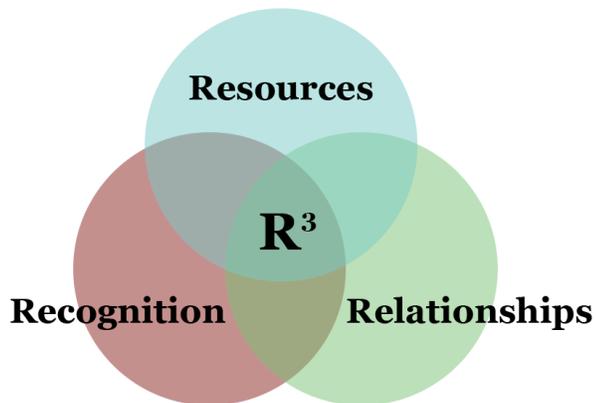
UMass ADVANCE PANDEMIC IMPACT STATEMENT TEMPLATE

WHY DO WE NEED TEMPLATES FOR PANDEMIC STATEMENTS?

This pandemic impact statement template, which relates to the UMass ADVANCE [Documenting Pandemic Impacts](#) tool, provides templates that faculty can use in creating their pandemic statements. The goal is to cut the time spent writing these statements, while providing examples for how to write, short, clear statements. It is important to note that pandemic impact statements are voluntary, and faculty can decide whether to include them on AFRs, for internal audiences for personnel cases, and/or for external audiences for personnel cases.



WHY DO WE WRITE PANDEMIC STATEMENTS?



With the pandemic impact statement, faculty members are helping ensure that the university recognizes both the additional contributions that they made due to the pandemic, and the limitations that the pandemic imposed upon them, so that their work is valued and any impacts do not derail their career.

UMass ADVANCE develops the R³ model, suggesting that faculty need *resources, relationships, and recognition* for successful careers. The pandemic statement allows for evaluators to *recognize* how the pandemic has shaped faculty experiences. It also may help faculty

articulate the *resources* they need to re-engage with their work given what has occurred, as well as the *relationships* that need to be built or rebuilt, given that the pandemic has disrupted essential connections between faculty members. The pandemic impact statement is an opportunity for faculty members to communicate how they've been affected, and what they need, going forward.

WHAT ARE SOME CONCERNS ABOUT WRITING PANDEMIC IMPACT STATEMENTS?

Faculty members write pandemic impact statements to document impacts while they still remember them. One concern is that writing such statements means additional workload at a time when many are already stretched. UMass ADVANCE's solution to this issue is to keep documentation short, using templates to help limit the time spent crafting such statements.

These statements also allow faculty members to clarify the specific impacts they experienced, since there is a great deal of variation by field, methods, gender, race, caregiver status, and other factors. Another concern faculty members express is that these statements ask them to document challenges, when faculty members normally only document achievements. UMass ADVANCE suggests that faculty members also use these statements to document their contributions, while using a matter-of-fact tone in addressing challenges caused by the pandemic. In addition, department personnel committees can provide summaries of how the discipline was disrupted, which can be appended to all annual faculty report evaluations or personnel evaluations, so that individual faculty do not have to specify details, if they wish.

The point to the pandemic impact statement is for evaluators to recognize how each faculty member's *workload* (how much they were doing in different areas) and *work context* (where and how they did their

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work) has differed due to the pandemic. Yet, another concern is that evaluators will ignore that context or workload, or – if faculty members document pandemic-related health and care issues – statements may activate caregiver or disability bias. UMass ADVANCE’s solution has been to train and educate evaluators to use pandemic statements appropriately, and about the need to avoid caregiver or disability bias. At the same time, UMass ADVANCE encourages faculty to only include care/health issues if they feel comfortable doing so. These statements are not mandatory, and some faculty members may want to write more detailed statements that they keep in their personal files, but do not share.

WHAT ARE SOME KEY PRINCIPLES IN WRITING PANDEMIC IMPACT STATEMENTS?

- Pandemic statements are voluntary! Faculty members should only write statements if they wish to do so.
- Statements are easier to write while effects are recent; consulting personal calendars can be helpful.
- Include both **disruptions** and **new/unexpected workload and contributions** in response to the crisis.
- Keep statements short and to the point. Faculty members can estimate how many additional hours specific activities took, but this is not necessary.
- Faculty members get to decide whether to share personal details. Some draft a personal copy (with additional information) for their own records.

GENERAL TEMPLATE

We like this generic statement about the pandemic more broadly, taken (with permission) from a UMass faculty member’s statement:

My students and collaborators are dealing with the stress of isolation; mental health crises; aging parents and parents sick with COVID-19 or other illnesses; compromised immune systems; and their own physical disabilities. The effects of the pandemic on me and my trainees’ careers are likely to be felt for years.

TEACHING AND MENTORING TEMPLATES

I had to prepare material to teach remotely XX courses over 2020-2021, adding substantial unexpected work during summer 2020 and winter 2021. I had to prepare YY of these courses for hybrid (in-person and remote) offering to accommodate students that could not be present on-campus.

I taught XX courses online, and XX course in person over 2020-21. The online courses required new pedagogical approaches, which required training and took time to develop; the in-person required more time to address health and safety concerns, and had to be prepared for hybrid format or with allowances for student extensions.

The required internship for our M.A. program was no longer offered, due to its face-to-face contact. I worked with XX students to develop alternate plans to complete the program.

Over 2020-21, I had multiple undergraduate and graduate students in crisis. Advising undergraduate and graduate students required additional time each week. Attempting to contact students and referring them to appropriate support offices at UMass also required substantial time.

As a new faculty in Fall 2020, it’s hard to know the effects. I have spent a great deal of time on teaching, as I had not ever taught online before, though I’m not sure how much of that time is also adjusting to a new

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institution. Some students just would stop coming to class, and my efforts to track them down took substantial time. Other students met with me regularly, and seemed to need a lot of emotional energy.

SERVICE TEMPLATES

My department moved from monthly XX-hour meetings to biweekly XX-hour meetings, meaning I spent an additional XX hours in meetings each month.

As program coordinator, I spent additional time helping colleagues transition courses for remote offering.

I developed or worked with staff to coordinate an online graduation ceremony for our students.

As session organizer for several sessions of our annual conference, I spend extra hours creating online sessions and replacing participants who dropped out.

As a new faculty member, I felt like it was very hard to connect with colleagues. I don't know if this is usual, or connected to the pandemic.

RESEARCH & CREATIVE WORK

As a result of the increased time documented on teaching and service, I necessarily spent less time on my research.

I had to stop the community-engaged study I had been carrying out since Fall 2019. This work may not be published, given its abrupt end. It took XX months to receive IRB permission for a new study.

I had to cancel field studies that were time sensitive. I had to postpone or cancel field activities part of ongoing research projects, which will impact the outcomes and reach of my research.

My funding ended, and neither my postdoc or doctoral students were able to complete their experiments, given lack of access to the lab. I had to provide alternative paths or limit the scope originally planned for these students to enable them to graduate.

I was unable to recruit international students to conduct research that I received during 2020-21. I have spent substantial extra time in my efforts to attempt to recruit qualified students.

Of students that I was able to recruit, XX were unable to come into the U.S. because of travel restrictions. This caused significant disruptions to my progress in my research.

All venues were closed, cancelling XX planned performances, which means less feedback and recognition of my creative works.

I pivoted my research/creative work in response to the racial health disparities of COVID-19, requiring substantial time, including time spent on public scholarship.

My research has been impacted by all of the extra time spent on teaching and meeting with students. I know I am spending less time than expected on research, but since it was my first year as a faculty member, I don't know how unusual this is, whether it's the transition to being a faculty member or the pandemic.

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PERSONAL IMPACTS

After contracting COVID-19, I was very sick for several weeks.

In-person schooling was not available to my 5 and 7-year-old children consistently; thus, I had to juggle supporting my children's on-line schooling with my work, working late into the night and on weekends.

Our childcare center closed, and there were no other childcare options; my partner and I had to juggle care for our 1 and 3-year-old children.

My father died unexpectedly of COVID; I have spent substantial time on his care, and dealing with the aftermath of his death.

WHAT RESOURCES EXIST FOR EVALUATION?

The [UMass Provost's office](#) includes specific guidance for how faculty members should be evaluated. Amel Ahmed, [Associate Provost for Equity & Inclusion](#), Michelle Budig, [Senior Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs](#), and Michael Eagen, [Associate Provost for Academic Personnel](#) provide bias training to personnel committees and further guidance. Questions can go to academic.personnel@umass.edu.

The [Massachusetts Society of Professors](#) (MSP), the faculty union, provides support to faculty members and workshops for personnel committee members, and other materials on its [website](#). Contact [the union](#) for further guidance.

The [Office of Faculty Development](#) provides many resources and support for career and leadership development. Contact: OFD@umass.edu

[UMass ADVANCE](#) provides support, workshops and consultations for both faculty members preparing for evaluations and evaluators during the pandemic. Contact: [Joya Misra](#)

Suggested Citation: 2021. Pandemic Impact Statement Template. University of Massachusetts Amherst ADVANCE Program.
