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**Sent:** Tuesday, September 08, 2020 11:00 AM  
**To:** [ALL-FACULTY-EMAIL@LISTS.UPENN.EDU](mailto:ALL-FACULTY-EMAIL@LISTS.UPENN.EDU)  
**Subject:** Faculty Guide and New Initiatives



**A MESSAGE TO PENN FACULTY**

from

Provost Wendell Pritchett

Vice Provost for Faculty Laura Perna

We are enormously grateful for your work in sustaining our academic mission this year. As we enter the second week of the semester, we have already heard from many students about how excited and appreciative they are for the engagement of their professors and advisors.

We also know that this is a challenging time, in which we are all navigating uncharted waters. We are therefore advancing three new initiatives to support faculty members. First, we have prepared a [**Faculty Guide**](https://provost.upenn.edu/sites/default/files/users/user96/COVIDFacultyGuide.pdf), with extensive guidance for teaching, mentoring, hiring, and promotion during the pandemic, as well as for furthering our shared goals of equity and inclusion. It also includes discussion of [resources for managing child and family care](https://www.hr.upenn.edu/PennHR/wellness-worklife/family-care/childcare-resources-and-support) and information about our new COVID-19 Childcare Grants and other potential sources of support.

Second, we have established a [**Research Recovery Program**](https://research.upenn.edu/funding/research-recovery-program/) with funding opportunities to mitigate the financial impacts of the pandemic, provide bridge funding between external grants, and support biomedical research on topics related to disparities in health care or carried out by faculty members disproportionately affected by COVID-19.

Third, we are **extending the probationary period by one year** for all assistant professors and associate professors without tenure in the tenure, clinician-educator, and research tracks, provided your review has not already begun, you are not in your mandatory or terminal year, and you have not already received an extension related to COVID-19. This extension recognizes the multiple implications of this unprecedented year for faculty life, work/life balance, and research productivity. Among other challenges, faculty members may have lost access to labs and field research sites, faced slowdowns in journal and other publication processes, been unable to disseminate research at conferences, and experienced unprecedented family and caregiving responsibilities – all while working to revamp courses for online delivery and devoting considerable time to advising and supporting our students. Faculty may also be undergoing increased stress and anxiety and allocating increased effort and energy to advance social and racial justice in our communities.

The automatic extension is designed to offer maximum flexibility. It does not require you to opt in, yet it can also be waived. It can be used to delay a reappointment review or be applied to a second appointment term, does not count against the total number of permitted extensions or total time in the probationary period, and does not preclude future extensions for reasons outlined in the [Faculty Handbook](https://catalog.upenn.edu/faculty-handbook/ii/ii-e/) Section II.E.3. We want to reassure you that the extension will carry no negative consequences for your review. Internal and external reviewers will be informed of the University-wide extension policy and its context in the global public health emergency.

Eligible faculty members will receive individualized letters, after which you are advised to work with your chair and/or dean to discuss how best to apply the extension to your individual situation and timeline.

Thank you for all you are doing for our community. We look forward to working together this year, and we will continue to keep you updated as this semester moves forward.