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Lehigh University COVID Pandemic Impact Statement

While the pandemic has affected all of our lives, it has not affected all faculty in the same ways. The pandemic has not changed our expectations for excellence, but there have been significant disruptions to the institution that shaped faculty work over the last 18 months. While we have encouraged our faculty to add their own impact statement, we have not required them to do so. Therefore, the absence of a statement from the candidate should not be taken as an indication that they were minimally affected. What follows describes the general conditions for our university from March 2020 through Spring semester 2021. During the pandemic, Lehigh University significantly restricted campus access and even shut down for periods in accordance with mandates from the State of Pennsylvania and guidance from local health officials. As such, there have been ongoing disruptions to work including the loss of research assistance and access to research subjects, sites, and archives to closures and occupancy limits for offices, labs, studios, libraries, and other facilities beginning March 2020. The university made several transitions from in-person to remote instruction and back. Because Lehigh is a fully residential campus and almost all faculty normally teach exclusively in person, faculty members devoted significant time in Summer 2020 to training themselves in the best practices of remote teaching and learning, as well as availing themselves of available workshops, to prepare for the 2020-21 academic year. Some faculty have experienced substantial increases in their informal service load in the form of providing additional academic and emotional support to struggling students and mentoring to colleagues. In addition, faculty have faced personal and professional challenges ranging from the cancellation of conferences and disruption to publication schedules to family members' unemployment and difficulty with elder and childcare arrangements. In fact, many school districts in our surrounding areas remained largely in remote learning mode well into Spring 2021. Please keep these contexts in mind as you conduct your review of the quality and impact of this candidate's research accomplishments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nathaniel N. Urban".

Nathaniel N. Urban
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Lawrence V. Snyder".

Lawrence V. Snyder
Deputy Provost for Faculty Affairs