

Note to the Dean/Provost/Chair:

Following up on the article you sent me this weekend ([Interview with Jessica Calarco](#)) and the research cited within ([this paper especially](#)), I spent some time discussing options for dealing with this crisis in parenting and care with colleagues. What is below is what I came up with as a plan for a belated response from our institution.

In order to signal that you understand how traumatic this fall has been for so many, and to begin the process of alleviating the material, psychic, and professional costs, I suggest the following:

(1) RECOGNITION

Send an email to the entire university community recognizing the professional and personal losses so many have suffered, on behalf of the university's unilateral decision to reopen largely as normal. A link to Calarco's research might be helpful here: recognize that things have changed for many of us, and that the solution must not be individualized, nor should we be patting ourselves on the back for clawing our way through. Gaslighting should never be the institutional response to a crisis.

Add "caregiving responsibilities" to the list of accommodations for online teaching.

(2) REWARD

An immediate and automatic cash payment (\$1000?) to every person on staff with a legally recognized dependent under 18, as designated by HR in August 2020. A simple and transparent process for those who are caregivers to elders or to anyone else to document that relationship and receive the same payment. This is simply a token of the fact that parents and caregivers have faced extra expenses of all kinds this fall, and did not receive even the usual small annual increase.

Every faculty member who taught two or more courses this fall automatically gets a one-course release at some point in the next three years, in recognition of the extraordinary labor they dedicated to making our response work. When they will use it will be negotiated within departments, with caregivers getting priority. Faculty with teaching deficits (owing one or more courses) will have one makeup course cancelled. Departments needing to hire temporary faculty to cover courses will prioritize hiring graduate students or recent PhDs from their programs, as possible.

(3) REORGANIZE

A continuation of last semester's policy limiting the use of CIFs for promotion purposes, with the possibility of ending this sort of evaluation moving forward. All letters requesting tenure and promotion reviews will include a statement asking reviewers to take the effects of COVID into consideration when making their assessments and to remove clauses asking them to evaluate whether the candidate would receive tenure at their university. Other steps will be taken after discussion with faculty in multiple public forums to evaluate their needs and concerns.