Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences  
Guidelines for Workplace Strategies  
August 2022  

Overview  
This document builds upon the University’s Workplace Strategies Policy and provides procedures for the implementation of these strategies for the College’s staff.  

In keeping with the University’s general practices, most of the College’s staff work on-campus during most of their work hours. However, the College has a large staff whose roles span a range of professional fields. Our administrative structure is decentralized with 50+ business units, principally academic departments and programs, located in many different buildings across the Evanston campus. With such diversity, the College does not have a central, uniform workplace and the demands of individual offices vary depending on academic discipline and the individual mission of the office, lab, or research group. With this diversity in mind, the College embraces the Workplace Strategies policy as a means to support our diverse business needs and workforce.  

For the purposes of this document, we have identified three broad categories of organizations in the College:  
- Academic departments, programs, centers, and institutes  
- Research groups and labs  
- Dean’s Office  

In general, the decision to implement the work strategies enumerated in the policy for any staff rests at the local level, e.g., between the staff member and immediate supervisor. For the Dean’s Office and academic departments, programs, centers, and institutes, the College has established suggested parameters for 1) standard hours for on-campus office coverage; and 2) the number of days each week a staff member may work remotely. For research groups and labs, the standard hours and the parameters for remote work are set by the supervising faculty member. In all cases, supervisors should consult with their chair, director, or associate dean to ensure there is a rational approach to flexible schedules across the unit.  

Standard Hours for Office Coverage - Dean’s Office and Academic Departments/Programs  
The University’s most common business hours are 8:30am – 5:00pm, and offices within the College are expected to adhere to these hours. This does not imply that all staff must work on-site during those hours. Rather, there should be a staff presence during those hours (not including lunch or other break times).  

During the summer, winter, and spring breaks, offices may be able to have more limited standard hours without compromising service to students, faculty, and staff.  

Offices that wish to set standard hours different than those noted above during the fall, winter, and spring quarters must inform the Dean’s Office (see Exception Requests section below) as to the office’s proposed alternative schedule and the means by which the office will ensure that service to students, faculty, and staff is not compromised.
In any given week a department or program may not be able to maintain hours consistent with the standard hours noted above due to staff vacations, sick days, etc. These occasional deviations from the standard office hours are expected and do not need to be communicated to the Dean’s Office. Additionally, alternative schedules that result from a staff member’s approved request for an accommodation through the Office of Equity do not require any vetting by the Dean’s Office. Information regarding these accommodations is available at https://www.northwestern.edu/equity/policies-procedures/accommodation/disability.html.

Remote Work - Dean’s Office and Academic Departments/Programs

Nearly all administrative roles in the College include work that can be accomplished off-site. However, the responsibilities of some positions, particularly those that are student-facing, may not allow for remote work at all or to a large extent. Positions within a department may have different options for remote work. For example, a staff member who serves as the department’s primary receptionist may have limited flexibility for remote work while others in the department who do not have that responsibility may have more opportunities for remote work. The College anticipates that all staff will work on-campus for at least a portion of their work week, with rare exceptions.

One day per week of remote work is the recommended target for those whose jobs can be performed remotely. However, two days per week of remote work may be considered and implemented where scheduling makes it possible. Remote work scheduling is contingent on the needs of the unit, and whether coverage can be maintained for the scheduled office hours. Requests for work schedules with more than two days of remote work require Dean’s Office review (see Exception Request section below).

In designing remote work schedules, managers and staff should consider the following:

- Remote work may be regularly scheduled or ad hoc:
  - Regularly scheduled: A staff member’s schedule includes an established remote work component that does not change during the year.
  - Ad hoc: A staff member is able to work remotely, with manager approval, on occasion and not on an established schedule.

- A remote work schedule can entail a day or days per week that are exclusively remote work days or a day or days per week where some hours are worked on-campus and other hours at home.

- Staff who work remotely are to maintain the same level of availability and productivity while working off-site as they do on campus.

- Managers are to take steps to ensure that staff working remotely are included in office communications and meetings, community-building efforts, and assignment of responsibilities to the same extent as staff working on-campus.
• Offices may require staff to attend on-campus events or activities on days that are normally scheduled as remote days for a staff member. Managers should provide as much advanced notice of these needs as is possible.

• Staff who work remotely assume financial responsibility for furniture and equipment, other than a University-issued laptop and/or other computing resources, for use in a home office.

Requests for Exceptions to Standard Hours or Remote Work Guidance: Weinberg offices that would like to operate with hours that differ from the standard hours described above, or offices with staff who are working more than two days per week remotely must request an exception from the Dean’s Office. Please note that Weinberg College’s exception request process supersedes the use of request forms suggested in the University Policy. The Dean’s Office collects requests for exceptions via the following Smartsheet form. Requests for the 2022-2023 academic year are due September 12, 2022. If you have a new exception request, or you were unable to submit your request by the deadline, please reach out to Amy Post, Beth Clifford Smith, or Hafiza Adam to initiate a new request.

Other Work Strategies:

The balance of this document provides additional information about the modalities identified in the Workplace Strategies policy, in addition to remote work, and is meant to help offices consider and adopt these strategies where feasible.

Staff who wish to request any workplace strategy should discuss the request with their immediate supervisor(s). Supervisors are expected to give all requests consideration. Offices may elect to have all requests approved by the chair, director, or associate dean.

A workplace strategy is implemented when there is mutual agreement between a staff member, supervisor and department chair, program director, or PI.

Staff who are not granted a proposed workplace strategy by their immediate supervisor may seek review of the request from their chair, director or associate dean; by the Dean’s Office; and/or by the Office of Human Resources.

Flextime:

1) University definition: A workplace strategy that provides an employee and their manager greater latitude in determining their work schedule beyond standard business hours or the ability to change work schedules from one week to the next depending on the needs of the operation or the personal needs of the employee. Under a flextime arrangement, an employee might be required to work a standard number of core hours within a specified period but have the discretion to work the rest of their required work hours at other points during the workday. Flextime does not alter the total number of standard work hours required in a workweek.

2) College practices:
   • Flextime can be requested by any staff member.
   • Staff who wish to utilize flextime should discuss the request with their supervisor.
   • Flextime schedules do not require approval from the Dean’s Office.
Compressed Work Week:

1) University policy: In a compressed workweek, employees work longer daily hours over fewer workdays (e.g., instead of working five eight-hour days per week, employees might work four ten-hour days per week.)

2) College practices:
   - A compressed work week can be requested by any staff member.
   - Staff who wish to utilize a compressed work week schedule should discuss the request with their supervisor.
   - Department chairs, program directors, or PIs who wish to request that a role work a compressed work week must notify the Dean’s Office in advance of the schedule being put into place. These requests require approval by the Office of Human Resources.

Part-time:

1) University Policy: A work schedule of at least 18.75 but fewer than 37.5 hours per week is considered part-time and may have prorated vacation, holiday, and sick time.

2) College practices:
   - The scheduled hours of a position, whether full-time or part-time, paid by appropriated funds are determined by the Dean’s Office.
   - The scheduled hours of a position paid by grant funds, gifts, or endowments are set by the position’s supervisor at the time a position is created.
   - Full-time staff who wish to voluntarily change their schedule to a part-time one, either permanently or temporarily, should approach their supervisor. If all parties agree, requests are submitted for approval by the Dean’s Office.
   - Part-time staff who wish to work additional hours should notify the Dean’s Office of their availability. Temporary assignments working for other offices are sometimes available and can result in a temporary increase in hours for staff whose ongoing positions are part-time.

Job Sharing:

1) University Policy: A work arrangement in which the responsibilities of one full-time position are shared by two employees. Job sharing differs from part-time work in that job share partners are expected to be interchangeable in work assignments and represent a single employee in all respects. The job-sharing participants each work a minimum of 18.75 hours a week and receive part-time benefits.

2) College practices:
   - Staff who wish to job-share should first approach their supervisor(s).
   - Department chairs, program directors, or PIs who wish to request that staff job-share must submit a request to the Dean’s Office in advance of the schedule being put into place.
Seasonal:

1) **University Policy:** A workplace strategy arrangement in which the employee uses a flexible work arrangement during a certain season such as during the summer or during breaks between academic terms.

2) **College practices:**
   - Some staff positions in the College are partial-year positions, meaning the work schedule spans 10 or 11 months rather than 12. The remaining month(s) are taken without pay but staff remain benefits-eligible as a full-time or part-time employee, provided the standard hours of the position meet the threshold for benefits eligibility.
     - The schedule of an appropriated position is determined by the Dean’s Office.
     - Staff who wish to voluntarily change from 12-month position to a 10 or 11-month position, either permanently or temporarily, should approach their manager.
   - Managers who support a change to the position’s work schedule must communicate those requests to the Dean’s Office.