

2022 Virtual TA Institute

Breakout Room Notes

Session Number: 2

Breakout Room Title: Setting Telework and Flexible Work Policies

Facilitator: Sharon Milberger - Michigan

Attendees: Rhonda Eppelsheimer-OHSU UCEDD, Randall Owen-Nevada UCEDD, Colleen McLaughlin-NJ UCEDD, Emily Graybill-GSU UCEDD, Sally Gould-Taylor-Temple Institute of Disabilities, John Tschida-Executive Director, AUCD, Katey Burke-Temple Institute of Disabilities, Phil Wilson-LSU UCEDD

Notetaker: Jeanette Cordova

Notes:

- Colleen – there was no policy. A few years pre-covid, they cultivated a telework policy of one day at home. Offices came back in a hybrid model. They are trying to get face time. It is a mix of things now in evaluating the next steps.
- Sally & Katey – New space but some of the accessibility pieces since we work statewide. 50% telework and has to be approved through the dean in the college. Katey – relate to culture and production of work. There is a lot of opportunity with the new space.
- Rhonda – Come to work generation and how can telework be positive toward the work and culture. Connectivity by not being present. Worried about the negative outcomes being pushed by the university. Pandemic everyone went home. People have moved away and has allowed for connection of those staff who were remote before. University is allowing center to decide.
- “Hotel station” for when people are in town. Still figuring out balance, as we bring new staff how do we bring them into our culture. Work mental health is a challenge, but staff doesn’t want to come back in office.
- Randall – started new role in midst of COVID. One other person to help provide equipment and then told to go home. Didn’t see anyone for four month. Started doing ½ coffee morning (now on Wednesdays) for people to connect via Zoom. Created a satellite office in Las Vegas to work. Worried they won’t come in to the office. They need a presence in Vegas. Nervous about creating policies that staff have to go them in person. Worried about losing space.
- Elizabeth – UCLA is growing center, however, there isn’t space at the university. No one wants to come back and the university wants everyone to come back. The university agreed on sharing space.



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- Phil – The biggest issue is about equity. More productive at the office than at home. We have about 45 people, remote located away from the center and come in periodically. It worked. When pandemic hit everyone went home. There are some staff that can't work from home so the issue is equity. 75% of the staff don't need to be in the center. PIs have to be on campus. It is a matter of trust. As long as your getting your work done. But how can we be fair to those that have to work in the office.
- Sally – people who are not working and haven't bounced back. Find a way to ensure that everyone is working effectively and there will be hybrid. I would not feel comfortable telling staff that they have to meet/participate in social things. Also, the majority of our staff are union members, and there are rules and policies about mandatory actions
- Rhonda – kept the hours 9-5pm. Core team meets weekly and full staff meets monthly. The university didn't want center to do hybrid meetings so the center pushed back about that as they were already doing this in meetings.
- UCLA – staff choose two days a week to work in the office. They have shared space and discuss changes. Monthly remote meetings, community advisory was quarterly and full day, but now 2-3 hours. If they want to come in more they can as long as they coordinator with their shared space partners.
- Sharon – leaving it up to staff to decide if they are in or out of office. But if they are working on a project they must be in the office.
- Another nuance – everyone did pivot. Offered internships virtual during the summer. Are they equity issues, can we bring more people in if virtual from rural areas?
- Phil – For their center, equity issues of traveling due to gas, especially for staff who don't have high salaries. Child and elder care. Rhonda agreed, and people have not been having to commute for 2.5 years, pay for very expensive parking, and gas, they do not prefer to go back to it. Alternative workweek.
- Sally – equity for everyone on the campus. How to work together in the university, like our cleaning staff that is black and brown.

Future TA Needs:

- Further conversations about telework with UCEDDs
- How to frame the conversation to staff
- Equity piece – How to create policy that is equitable to those that can't work remote at all.
- How to factor in travel to work due to gas, especially those without high salary, child and elder care.



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