

IOWA

FUTURE OF WORK @IOWA

Exploring Flexible Work Arrangements Post-Pandemic

June 2021

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Established in November 2020, the Future of Work@Iowa project aimed to reimagine how and where University of Iowa employees work after COVID-19.

The project focused largely on understanding the long-term potential for remote and hybrid work, flexible schedules, and other types of work arrangements that have proven effective—but not without challenges—during the pandemic.

Our key observations and recommendations:

- Developing reasonable, realistic options for work arrangements—primarily at the college/division level—will help the university compete for talent and satisfy employee calls for more options.
- Greater adoption of remote/hybrid work may yield space-management and cost-saving benefits by reducing demand for on-site space (whether university-owned or leased).
- Strategic, mission-driven adoption of remote work is good for the state of Iowa. Savings may be redirected to student-facing programs, competitiveness may attract more world-class teachers and researchers, and flexibility will help some university employees stay in their Iowa hometowns rather than moving for work.
- Many university jobs require on-campus work. Teaching and health care, in particular, depend on in-person interaction.
- Work arrangements must put university mission needs and service expectations first. They need to be implemented intentionally and equitably, backed by mission/service rationales and subject to review.
- Colleges, divisions, and central service units should continue progress toward a work-arrangement pilot for fall 2021. Colleges and divisions should determine which jobs are suitable for remote/hybrid work or flexible schedules, document specific arrangements with employees, and track impact on costs, productivity, engagement, and other factors.
- Any long-term remote/hybrid work or flexible schedule arrangement requires formal documentation, reporting, and periodic review. Short-term arrangements of 30 days or less (14 days or less for international remote work) do not require formal documentation.
- Improved process for out-of-state and international work ensure these arrangements support mission needs and keep the university competitive with research institutions in other states. Out-of-state remote-work arrangements lasting more than 30 days and international arrangements lasting more than 14 days require additional review by University Human Resources and other central service units.
- University Human Resources should develop new resources and training to support remote/hybrid work, particularly for supervisors managing remote employees and/or hybrid teams.
- All university employees should have access to professional development, support services, and other resources regardless of their specific work arrangement.
- Mental health resources, family caregiving programs, and other supports for employees are essential as most work shifts back to campus and as the university establishes long-term options for work arrangements.
- In most cases, the university should provide employees working remotely with university-owned computers. Use of university computers rather than personal equipment is strongly preferred.

- In general, the university will provide equipment only for an employee's primary work location. The university can provide IT equipment, some non-IT equipment (e.g., office chairs), and supplies for remote-work locations.
- Employees working remotely will provide their own workspaces and large furnishings (e.g., desks) as needed. Employees working remotely must minimize distractions and keep environments conducive to quality work.
- Employees working remotely will be responsible for their own internet service and home network, ensuring bandwidth and coverage necessary to participate in work activities.
- Gauging long-term impacts on campus space utilization and management will take time and data from the fall 2021 pilot. Space-related recommendations are expected by mid-2022.
- Space-management decisions should follow established practices that balance college/division interests with university-wide needs.
- Greater adoption of remote/hybrid work may require the university to develop and manage new kinds of work spaces. Planning and piloting for those developments should begin now.

HOW WE GOT HERE

Applying lessons from the pandemic

The University of Iowa has a unique opportunity to reimagine and re-envision how we work, where we work, how we engage, how we innovate, and how we serve.

University Human Resources and the Office of the Provost established the Future of Work@Iowa project to develop campus-wide recommendations that address these questions:

- How does the disruptive change of COVID-19 impact the University of Iowa and its strategic path toward being a destination university?
- How do we reimagine work post COVID-19?
- How do we develop high-impact practices to create a highly engaged and inclusive workforce?
- What does the evolution of human resources/university policies, services, and strategies look like?

Focus on work arrangements

The guidelines proposed in this report focus on work arrangements—where, when, and how university employees do their work. The experience of the past year shows us that employees can effectively perform some—but certainly not all—jobs off campus.

The past year also revealed the challenges associated with remote work, flexible schedules, and other arrangements. We need to address these challenges if we're to expand our range of potential long-term work arrangements.

Why this matters

Simply put, the university needs to keep pace with market trends and become a destination workplace in order to compete for top talent.

Peer institutions including the [University of Michigan](#) have launched similar projects to rethink work arrangements. A recent informal survey of 24 research universities found that nearly all are developing post-COVID policies on the topic. Remote work and related arrangements hold particular promise for functions like [information technology](#).

Beyond higher education, tech companies like [Twitter](#) have embraced remote work. Other companies (including [Ford](#)) imagine hybrid models with a mix of on- and off-site work. Iowa firm [BusinessSolver](#) recently announced its shift to a national “remote-first” employment model.

University Human Resources conducted an informal survey of several Iowa companies in biotechnology, financial services, engineering, and other sectors. All are developing long-term plans for remote/hybrid work:

- One biotech firm has transitioned a third of its employees to remote/hybrid work, depending on roles. Some hybrid arrangements require two to three days a week on site, others two to three days per month.

- After finding strong interest in remote work, another biotech firm is planning to go 75% remote and 20% hybrid (with the remaining 5% on-site full time for HIPAA compliance reasons).
- A financial services company has classified all roles as “remote” or “non-remote” to guide work-arrangement decisions.
- Another biotech firm has gone completely hybrid. Teams choose three days a week for on-site work and work the other two remotely.
- A major engineering employer is conducting a project similar to the university’s, establishing roles that require on-site work and anticipating that other roles will be eligible for long-term remote/hybrid arrangements.

The university competes with other employers locally, regionally, and nationally. More flexible work arrangements are becoming the norm in fields like IT, where recruitment and retention are already challenging. We’ve adopted more aggressive recruitment strategies, streamlined hiring processes, and kept benefits competitive. Expanding our view of effective work arrangements is another effort to remain competitive.

UI employees want a flexible work future. Results from early-2021 focus groups with nearly 1,400 Professional & Scientific and Merit staff found interest in hybrid work arrangements that blend on-site and remote work. That finding aligns with results from recent national and global surveys:

- 87% of American workers want to continue working remotely at least one day per week ([Prudential Pulse of the American Worker](#) survey, March 2021)
- 68% say hybrid work arrangements represent their workplace ideal ([Prudential](#))
- 63% of high-growth companies have adopted “productivity anywhere” models ([Accenture Future of Work Study 2021](#))

Long-term adoption of remote/hybrid work has implications for university facilities and budgets. Demand for on-campus space—particularly office space—could decline. At the same time, the university may need new types of spaces and technologies to maintain a hybrid workforce.

Promises of greater efficiency, space reallocation for priority programs, reduced maintenance costs and deferred maintenance, and less demand for leased space offer compelling incentives to expand remote/hybrid work.

Future of Work project process

Starting in November 2020, the Future of Work team asked subcommittees to consider what’s worked and what might come next for five areas:

- Faculty and instructors
- Staff
- Health sciences
- Physical space
- Technology

Key subcommittee findings and recommendations are integrated into this report. Original subcommittee summaries are available on the [project website](#).

Focus groups were conducted with faculty and—with help from college/division leaders—staff. We invited campus feedback via the project website and reviewed previous or parallel faculty/staff surveys assessing work experiences during COVID-19.

In March 2021, we released [preliminary guidelines](#) for work arrangements to help colleges and divisions plan for resumption of on-campus activities in fall 2021. We also released guidelines for faculty and instructors that established a framework for resuming classroom teaching in the fall. This report builds on that initial guidance.

Work arrangement definitions

Work locations

- **On-campus work:** Job functions that must be performed or are most effectively performed at an on-campus location. Employees have an assigned workspace at an on-campus site.
- **Remote work:** Job functions that can be performed effectively entirely off campus. Employees typically do not have a personal workspace assigned at an on-campus site.
- **Hybrid work:** Job functions that can be performed effectively in a combination of on- and off-campus locations. Employees typically have a personal or shared workspace assigned or available to them at an on-campus site.

Work scheduling

- **Standard schedule:** Work hours that reflect typical start and stop times for a unit's employees. Work may be performed on or off campus.
- **Flexible schedule:** Designated and consistent work hours that differ from standard unit start and stop times. Work may be performed on or off campus.

Out-of-state work

- **Domestic:** More than 30 consecutive calendar days worked outside of Iowa. Domestic out-of-state work arrangements require additional review.
- **International:** More than 14 consecutive calendar days worked outside the United States. International work arrangements require additional review.

Additional Resources

Future of Work@Iowa website:

<https://hr.uiowa.edu/administrative-services/current-initiatives/future-workiowa>

Preliminary guidelines for work arrangements (released March 2021):

<https://hr.uiowa.edu/administrative-services/current-initiatives/future-workiowa/preliminary-guidelines>

Fall 2021 guidelines for faculty and instructors (released March 2021, updates ongoing):

<https://provost.uiowa.edu/faculty-return-campus-fall-2021>

PUTTING MISSIONS FIRST

Establishing equitable, service-focused practices

While factors such as market trends, employee preferences, and on-campus space utilization are important, the future of work arrangements come down to one question: What best serves the university's missions and the students, families, patients, and communities who depend on us?

Missions and service expectations must come first, in keeping with these principles:

- Decisions about work arrangements for specific jobs are best made at the college/division level.
- The university should offer foundational guidance and support for these decisions and coordinate practices across participating colleges and divisions.
- Consistency and equity are essential at the college/division level.

Mission emphasis determines scope

This focus on missions means not all types of jobs are suitable for remote/hybrid work, flexible schedules, etc.

- In-person classroom teaching is fundamental. Fall 2021 guidelines for faculty and instructors emphasize return to classroom teaching. While some administrative and research work can be completed remotely, most faculty and instructor roles require an on-campus presence.
- By definition, most patient care takes place face to face. Clinical faculty and staff have continued to serve patients throughout the pandemic. UI Health Care expects most employees in non-clinical roles to resume on-campus work.
- Many other university jobs require in-person interaction or on-site responsibilities. Some may be eligible for hybrid work arrangements, but most will continue to entail on-campus work.

Fairness and equity

The past year has been difficult for many of us. Looking to the future requires recognizing where we are today, taking time to solve problems together, try new practices, and make responsible decisions.

Fairness demands consistent and transparent decision-making. Processes should be clear, and decisions should be based on application of standard criteria free of personal favoritism or bias.

Equity recognizes that different employees face different circumstances and have different needs. For example, not everyone has a workspace or reliable Internet service at home. Work arrangement decisions can take those circumstances into account, which may mean that different employees establish different arrangements.

The following principles offer starting points for fair, equitable practices:

- Policies, practices, and decisions around work arrangements must be transparent and open to modification.

- Employees must be held to the same standards of performance regardless of their specific work arrangements.
- Professional development and support services must be available to all employees regardless of work arrangements.

Some useful points to keep in mind as we consider work arrangements:

- Alternative work arrangements shouldn't be considered job benefits or entitlements. Mission needs and responsibilities dictate the range of effective arrangements for any given job, and all arrangements come with potential trade-offs.
- If a job isn't suitable for one type of work arrangement (e.g., remote work), it may be eligible for another (e.g., flexible schedule).
- Any work arrangement may entail some costs to employees. On-campus work often comes with costs for transportation and/or parking. Remote work likely comes with costs for workspace and connectivity.

WHAT'S WORKED AND WHAT HASN'T

Summarizing campus feedback

This report proposes a future informed by recent experience. Colleges and divisions asked about 1,400 Professional & Scientific and Merit staff to reflect on this experience in online focus groups.

We've collected the most common observations here, along with feedback from faculty focus groups and Future of Work subcommittee findings focused on the health sciences.

What has worked well during the pandemic?

- Communication, connectivity, collaboration, cohesion, trust, and inclusion
- Enhanced knowledge of technology (and sense there's more we can learn/do)
- Productivity and efficiency as a result of fewer non-critical interruptions
- Transitioning to paperless business and similar steps that cut costs and boost efficiency
- Flexibility resulting in:
 - Lower stress
 - Increased satisfaction
 - Attention to family/children/pets/elder care
 - Well-being (individualized care and self-managed time)
 - Improved physical health and fitness
- Individual cost savings (parking, gasoline, business attire, auto maintenance, food)
- Cross-campus diversity, equity, and inclusion awareness and practices
- Increased participation in online meetings, education, and events
- Flexibility and quick adoption of new work and safety protocols
- Ability to maintain essential in-person teaching and services

What would you leave behind or never want to do again?

- Face-to-face meetings being the standard for all discussions
- Meetings without substance
- Following historical practices (e.g., paper documents and files) because "that is how we've always done it"
- COVID-related practices, isolation, fear of the unknown, and rapid transitions
- Rigid work hours and wasted time commuting
- Inadequate work-related internet costs and connectivity
- Technology challenges

How have you maintained a sense of team (and how will you continue to maintain it)?

- Regular, brief virtual check-in meetings
- Intentional social team-building and skill-building
- Electronic chat, IM, virtual polling and focus groups, check-ins
- Intentional recognition events in smaller departmental groups
- Intentional brainstorming and innovation; use of Zoom and Skype to screen-share
- No geographic barriers
- Increased space for everyone to speak in virtual meetings

What are the opportunities of different work arrangements from the perspectives of students, employees, and the community?

- Competitive employer recruitment with broader access to a geographically dispersed talent pool
- Potential retention of current staff due to increased well-being, work-life balance, and physical health
- Flexibility of work hours and locations increasing recruitment and retention efforts
- On-demand customer support to decrease gaps and increase timely responses
- Reduced need for parking, office space, building expenses, etc.
- Increased safety, both on campus and traveling to/from campus

What are the challenges of different work arrangements from the perspectives of students, employees, and the community?

- Unreliable internet connectivity and inconsistent equipment needs
- Adapting to new best practices and an ever-changing business model
- Motivating change from historical patterns
- Enhanced supervisor training and employee onboarding for a hybrid environment
- Zoom fatigue and general burnout
- Employee buy-in and motivation for reimagining campus
- Equitability and consistency in decision-making
- Maintaining a sense of community
- Isolation and mental stress
- Revenue losses due to parking practices, processes, and procedures
- Blending face-to-face and hybrid work practices
- Ongoing pandemic issues—ensuring ongoing mental health support
- Student expectations for in-person teaching and service
- Challenges to research continuity, especially for projects involving human subjects (updating protocols, recruiting participants)

ESTABLISHING STAFF WORK ARRANGEMENTS

Making decisions at the college/division level

In March 2021, the university released preliminary work-arrangement guidelines to help colleges and divisions plan for resumption of on-campus activities in fall 2021. These guidelines emphasized:

- Expanding views of effective work arrangements to include options like remote work, hybrid work, and flexible schedules
- Helping colleges and divisions determine which work arrangements best serve university missions, strategic priorities, and business needs
- Reviewing job functions at the college/division level to establish which jobs can be performed effectively from remote locations, on flexible schedules, etc.
- Coordinating work-arrangement practices across colleges/divisions for consistency and equity
- Planning, documenting, and implementing work arrangements for specific employees on a trial basis
- Developing a fall 2021 pilot to track, evaluate, and enhance work arrangements

This report builds on the March 2021 guidelines, clarifying concepts and suggesting additional direction to help colleges and divisions develop transparent, equitable processes for proposing, approving, and reviewing work arrangements.

Core principles

Work-arrangement decisions are best made at the college or division level in keeping with these principles:

- Decisions about when, where, and how work gets done should allow flexibility so long as resulting arrangements respect college/division goals and customer experience needs.
- Colleges and divisions should determine which jobs are eligible for remote/hybrid work or flexible schedules based on job functions.
- Processes and decisions should be established at the college/division level, not by individual supervisors. They should reflect institutional guidelines *and* each college or division's specific needs.
- Out-of-state remote/hybrid work arrangements require additional institutional review (e.g., General Counsel, Risk Management, Provost, Information Technology Services, and University Human Resources). Offices charged with reviewing out-of-state arrangements should assess and request any additional resources needed for compliance.

Criteria to guide work arrangement decisions

Colleges and divisions were asked to consider which jobs are suitable for remote/hybrid work or flexible schedules and how these arrangements might benefit the university. These factors can help guide decisions:

- How much regular, in-person interaction a job requires
- How remote/hybrid work or flexible schedules may affect overall service and effectiveness
- How remote/hybrid work or flexible schedules may impact individual performance for affected employees
- How work arrangements reflect candidate/employee preferences
- How more flexible work arrangements enhance recruitment or retention
- Whether remote/hybrid work or other arrangements enhance space utilization (e.g., by reducing footprint and costs or by reallocating space to on-campus priorities)
- Whether affected orgs/units are prepared to address space and technology needs associated with remote work, flexible schedules, etc.

When to document work arrangements

Decision-making and implementation processes outlined here apply to long-term work arrangements, including:

- Any remote/hybrid work or flexible schedule arrangement lasting more than 30 consecutive calendar days.
- International remote-work arrangements lasting more than 14 consecutive calendar days

Note that all long-term, out-of-state remote work arrangements (more than 30 days domestic out of state, more than 14 days international) require expanded review. Out-of-state and international remote-work options can support research and scholarship and keep the university competitive but should be governed by consistent, efficient processes.

Shorter-term, temporary arrangements do not require formal review and reporting processes. Some additional considerations:

- Per current [flexible work policies](#), any long-term change to work location or schedule requires a minimum four-week notice period.
- Work-arrangement changes require a reasonable review period at the college/division level. Out-of-state work arrangements require additional time for institutional review.
- Colleges and divisions must fully document arrangements for remote/hybrid work or flexible schedules using [Employee Self Service tools](#).
- Criteria for reviewing denied work arrangements will be developed.

Supporting supervisors

University Human Resources will incorporate information about training, onboarding, and supervising remote/hybrid teams into mandatory supervisor training.

- The existing [Supervisors' Toolbox](#) and other training resources will expand to address:
 - Onboarding remote/hybrid employees
 - Communication and collaboration among employees with different work arrangements

- Performance coaching and management implications
- Connecting remote/hybrid or flexible-schedule employees with training and support resources
- Supervisor skills and competencies should include managing in a remote/hybrid environment as appropriate.

Leading change

As colleges and divisions establish mission-driven policies and practices for work arrangements, leaders should play active parts in leading change.

- Leaders should convey an institutional perspective, focusing on how changes they've identified advance the university's goals for providing world-class education, research, and service.
- Colleges and divisions should consider initiatives that clarify org-level practices and lead cultural change as needed.
- Leaders should embrace training opportunities and encourage others to do the same.
- Colleges and divisions should encourage ongoing dialogue about effective work arrangements, process improvements, and related needs.

Fall 2021 pilot period considerations

The March 2021 guidelines proposed a fall 2021 pilot for new work-arrangement processes at the college/division and university levels. As colleges and divisions approach the pilot phase, they should:

- Collect data on equipment costs and related factors (i.e., IT equipment for employees working remotely)
- Collect any additional data to inform analysis of cost savings or avoidance (i.e., employee retention, turnover, engagement, or similar measures)

Additional Resources

Current flexible work policies:

<https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/human-resources/flexible-work-arrangements>

REMOTE-WORK EFFECTIVENESS, ENVIRONMENTS, AND EQUIPMENT

Understanding university and employee responsibilities

Planning and implementing off-site work arrangements requires careful consideration and clear communication.

The following guidelines apply to fully remote work arrangements or hybrid arrangements where employees split their time between campus and remote sites.

Workplace experience guidelines

Any work arrangement should consider whole-person needs, including mental health, family caregiving, and overall well-being regardless of where or when an employee works.

- All employees should have access to retooling/reskilling and other developmental needs.
- University Human Resources and colleges/divisions should inform employees about implications of remote work for:
 - Application of university policies (especially for employees working out of state, domestically or internationally)
 - Out-of-state (domestic or international) tax issues
 - Out-of-state (domestic or international) health-insurance coverage
 - Isolation and other psychosocial factors
- University Human Resources and colleges/divisions should establish best practices, training, and other resources that enhance communication, collaboration, and meetings in remote-work arrangements.
- As remote work becomes more common, University Human Resources, OneIT, and other central service units should update guidance on employee experience, environments and ergonomics, technology, and other considerations.

Work environment guidelines

Employees working remotely are generally responsible for providing effective work environments, with advice, support, and some equipment/supplies available from the university.

- Remote-work environments should promote overall employee well-being.
- In general, the university will provide equipment only for an employee's primary work location, on-campus or remote. Colleges/divisions can choose to equip more than one location at their discretion.
- The university can provide IT equipment, some non-IT equipment (e.g., office chairs), and office supplies for remote-work locations. See the [Off-Campus Office Set-up Guide](#) or the table below for details.

- Employees and colleges/divisions should make every effort to use existing university equipment and reduce the need for new equipment purchases. Employees working remotely should consult with supervisors and local IT staff before taking any university equipment off site.
- Employees working remotely should convey a professional image that consistently reflects how they'd present themselves in person or on campus.
- Employees working remotely should reduce distractions as much as possible. In online meetings or phone calls, they should maintain an atmosphere that fosters focus and participation.
- Colleges and divisions should establish any specific requirements for remote workspaces, equipment, or other environmental factors and coordinate periodic reviews with employees.

Technology guidelines

The university and remote employees share responsibility for information technology and services.

- Colleges and divisions are generally responsible for providing computers, monitors, and related equipment for remote/hybrid employees. Laptop computers are encouraged for most remote/hybrid workers.
- The use of university-owned and managed computers rather than personal equipment is strongly preferred.
- For more information about using university-owned IT equipment, see the [Off-Campus Office Set-up Guide](#).
- Remote/hybrid employees must follow all data security policies and best practices, especially when using personal equipment or when they have access to sensitive information.
- Employees with remote/hybrid work arrangements are generally responsible for providing internet connectivity, bandwidth, and home networking capabilities that support effective work. The university will not reimburse employees for internet service or networking equipment.
- Internet service and bandwidth requirements may vary based on job functions.
- The university should provide standard IT support, services, and training to all employees regardless of where or when they work.
- All university IT policies apply regardless of work location.
- OneIT and colleges/divisions should expand and market training on IT services that enhance remote and hybrid work, collaboration among distributed teams, and overall workplace effectiveness.
- OneIT should provide recommendations on when and how to use different IT tools or services and should strive to eliminate redundant tools.

Meeting and collaboration guidelines

Online meetings—especially hybrid meetings that mix on- and off-campus participants—need intentional planning, management, and participation.

- In keeping with work environment guidelines, employees working remotely should eliminate distractions during online meetings and choose appropriate background images, etc.
- In keeping with technology guidelines, employees working remotely should ensure that connections, video, and audio are clear and secure.
- Meeting organizers should ensure access and inclusion for all participants, providing online meeting links as needed, scheduling appropriate facilities for hybrid meetings, and facilitating collaboration.

Equipment eligible for off-site use or university purchase

Commonly Requested Equipment	Options for Off-Site Use (Primary Work Location)	
Computer Equipment & Peripherals	Move Existing University Equipment	Purchase New with University Funds
Desktops	Allowable	Allowable (approval required)
Laptops	Allowable	Allowable (approval required)
Tablets	Allowable	Allowable (approval required)
Webcam	Allowable	Allowable (approval required)
Headset/microphone	Allowable	Allowable (approval required)
Mouse	Allowable	Allowable (approval required)
Scanner	Allowable	Allowable (approval required)
Docking station	Allowable	Allowable (approval required)
Printer	Allowable	Allowable (approval required)
Wireless access point/router/modem	Not allowable	Not allowable—employee is responsible for internet connectivity and home networking
Mid-Size Office Furnishings (50 lbs or less)	Move Existing University Equipment	Purchase New with University Funds
Chair	Allowable	Allowable (approval required)
Sit/stand desk attachment	Allowable	Allowable (approval required)
Small cabinet	Allowable	Allowable (approval required)
Large Office Furnishings	Move Existing University Equipment	Purchase New with University Funds
Desk	Not allowable	Not allowable
Mid-large cabinet	Not allowable	Not allowable
Cubicle walls/workstation	Not allowable	Not allowable

Additional Resources

Off-Campus Office Set-up Guide:

<https://ap-purchasing.fo.uiowa.edu/news/2021/05/campus-set-guide>

Data security policies and practices for personal devices:

<https://itsecurity.uiowa.edu/requirements-and-best-practices-personally-owned-devices>

Best practices for data security and remote work:

<https://itsecurity.uiowa.edu/resources/everyone/working-remotely>

CAMPUS SPACE MANAGEMENT AND INNOVATION

Charting initial steps

It's possible to imagine how remote/hybrid work, in particular, might change demands for campus space:

- Need for office space—currently 23% of all campus space—may decline. At the same time, the need for meeting or collaboration space may grow.
- Changing use patterns may open more space for instruction, research, or functions that need to be performed on campus.
- Utility, maintenance, and lease costs—as well as deferred maintenance needs—may decrease.

Whether these predictions (or others) come to pass depends on how colleges and divisions implement work-arrangement options and how many employees shift to remote/hybrid work for the long term.

We need more data and discussion to project future needs and update space management practices to accommodate changing work arrangements. We expect to develop additional recommendations by mid-2022.

For now, we can establish principles to guide future space management decisions, plan and pilot the types of spaces the campus may need, and offer guidance for decision-making at the college/division and university levels.

Space management principles and goals

The [University Space Committee](#) oversees reallocations of university space and the long-range University Space Plan. The Future of Work physical space subcommittee consulted with the University Space Committee to develop these forward-looking principles and goals:

- All campus space ultimately belongs to the university and is allocated to units.
- Shared best practices and metrics should guide space allocation and management decisions resulting from adoption of remote/hybrid work arrangements.
- All units should report data on space utilization to inform decisions at the college/division and university levels.
- Periodic reviews by all units should identify underutilized areas and inform decisions about future uses or reallocation.
- The university should provide central resources for units that need assistance reconfiguring campus spaces to accommodate remote/hybrid work.
- The university should develop a system of shared meeting and work spaces that can promote collaboration and improve space use, including a central scheduling program for sharable spaces.

Potential space needs

Greater adoption of remote/hybrid work will create need for new types of office and meeting spaces, including:

- Shared on-campus spaces for employees who mostly work off site (e.g., “hoteling” spaces available for short-term use by remote employees coming to campus)
- Meeting spaces equipped for collaboration between on-campus and remote employees

The Future of Work physical space subcommittee has developed a breakdown of [potential office/meeting space types](#). In addition, space planning staff have developed a draft [office and meeting space planning template \(xlsx file download\)](#) to assess space needs as colleges/divisions consider remote work or other arrangements.

In conjunction with the fall 2021 work arrangements pilot, Facilities Management is developing a shared-space prototype to evaluate basic space requirements, locations, technology needs, management, scheduling, and other factors. Located in University Capitol Center, the new Collaboration Center will include a range of office- and meeting-space types available to remote/hybrid workers.

Technology needs

Developing shared workspaces and meeting spaces, in particular, means addressing technology considerations.

- OneIT and Facilities Management should partner on recommendations for new on-campus spaces and technology available to support remote/hybrid employees.
- OneIT should develop standard IT recommendations for shared hoteling spaces with specifications for monitors, docking stations, keyboards/mice, webcams, etc. Hoteling and other shared spaces should support a reasonable number of laptop computers.
- OneIT should investigate scheduling solutions that allow employees to reserve hoteling or other shared spaces.
- Meeting rooms should be equipped to support hybrid meetings. OneIT should develop video conferencing guidelines and expand equipment availability (e.g., kits/carts that can be set up in different spaces as needed).
- OneIT should identify solutions for whiteboarding and other collaboration methods in online/hybrid meetings, providing device recommendations.

Adapting to change

As on-campus space needs change, space management decisions should balance university, college/division, and unit needs. Decisions should prioritize strategic goals, program effectiveness, efficiency, and cost savings.

- Data and experience from pilot projects will inform long-term space planning processes and decisions. We expect space management evaluation to continue into 2022, with additional recommendations to follow.
- The university should revise space-planning and utilization metrics to track and assess changes associated with remote/hybrid work.
- During the fall 2021 work-arrangements pilot period and beyond, colleges and divisions should assess and report changing space needs.

- The university will take advantage of space-need changes to reduce operating costs, reduce deferred maintenance, eliminate leased space, decommission inadequate facilities, and repurpose assets where necessary.

Additional Resources

University Space Committee:

<https://planning-and-development.fo.uiowa.edu/committees/university-space-committee>

Space planning:

<https://planning-and-development.fo.uiowa.edu/campus-planning/space-planning>

Office and meeting space types:

<https://hr.uiowa.edu/sites/hr.uiowa.edu/files/2021-05/Space Subcommittee Space Types.pdf>

Draft planning template for office and meeting space (xlsx file download):

<https://hr.uiowa.edu/sites/hr.uiowa.edu/files/2021-05/Future Work Planning Template Ver 4 3-10-21.xlsx>

NEXT STEPS

Preparing for fall and beyond

University employees will return to on-campus work in time for the fall 2021 semester, when the university resumes in-person classes. Colleges, divisions, and central service units have begun turning their focus to long-term potential for remote/hybrid work and similar arrangements.

This report represents the next step in this process. It responds to needs identified by employees and college/division leaders but also notes areas for ongoing attention.

Return to campus

The university's coronavirus website includes [complete guidelines for fall 2021](#), emphasizing return to an on-campus, face-to-face, residential experience with recommended health and safety measures.

While not required, vaccination against novel coronavirus is encouraged and is available to employees and students free of charge. As conditions and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance evolve, the university's [coronavirus website](#) remains the most up-to-date source for campus-related information.

Fall 2021 guidelines for faculty and instructors were developed by the Future of Work faculty subcommittee and released in March 2021. Plans for fall establish the expectation that most university employees will return to on-campus work.

The university will end the Temporary Alternative Work Arrangement (TAWA) program on Aug. 6. Employees with health conditions that may increase risks from coronavirus infection can discuss work arrangements with local human resources staff or Faculty and Staff Disability Services.

Returning to campus and phasing out COVID-specific programs allows us to focus on developing long-term work arrangement practices.

Work arrangement pilot

Preliminary guidelines for work arrangements released in March 2021 established a framework for developing options at the college/division level.

The guidelines also proposed piloting new work arrangement processes and documenting their impact during the fall 2021 semester. Colleges, divisions, University Human Resources, and other partners have continued to develop the pilot in keeping with the following timeline:

<p>Pre-Planning Phase March-May 2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review March 2021 preliminary guidelines. • Establish college/division-level implementation committees. • Develop principles and mission/business rationale for expanding potential work arrangements. • Complete initial review of job functions eligible for new or different work arrangements.
<p>Implementation Phase June-August 2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to campus guidelines for process, plan/agreement templates, and methodology. • Begin conversations with employees and managers interested in different work arrangements. If work arrangement requests are related to an employee's health condition or disability, consult Faculty and Staff Disability Services. • Establish work plans and agreements (employee-specific location and/or schedule arrangements, IT needs, space considerations, etc.). • Implement six-month trial with evaluation for each work agreement.
<p>Pilot Phase Fall 2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track implementation issues and other items for consideration by campus-wide Work Arrangement Implementation Committee.
<p>Evaluation Phase Early 2022</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate initial review of new work arrangements with supervisors. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How is the arrangement working for the employee? ○ How is it working for the unit? • Consider approving arrangements on a 12-month basis, reviewing annually.

The pilot will close with a report to university leadership by March 31, 2022. The report will include additional recommendations for work arrangements.

Policy, training, and resources

University Human Resources, other campus HR professionals, and college/division leaders will continue to coordinate policy and process development through the campus-wide Work Arrangement Implementation Committee.

- At the college/division level, leaders should continue to communicate work arrangement practices and eligibility decisions, seek feedback, and support cultural shifts as needed.
- University Human Resources will finalize an Employee Self Service tool for reporting remote/hybrid work and/or flexible-schedule arrangements. Colleges and divisions should use this tool to document arrangements made with individual employees.
- University Human Resources will expand supervisor training curricula and resources to include modules on managing remote employees and hybrid teams.

Support for employees

Transitional preparations for fall 2021 and long-term planning for work arrangements should emphasize resources for employees who are managing change and balancing work with family and other responsibilities.

- Short-term counseling, referrals, and other services available through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) should be available to all employees, including those working remotely. EAP can help staff and faculty manage challenges associated with returning to campus or changing work arrangements.
- Family Services and other University Human Resources units should continue to develop child care, elder care, and related options that help employees manage change.
- LiveWELL and other programs designed to boost employee well-being should continue to develop and/or market initiatives that reach employees working remotely.
- Supervisor training will emphasize the essential part supervisors play in connecting their team members with support resources. Training also will continue to stress attention to work-life balance, fairness and equity, and best practices for change management.

Technology

OneIT, other central service units, and colleges/divisions, should focus on these priorities:

- OneIT will assess potential duplication in technology tools (e.g., multiple options for online meetings), provide use-case recommendations for tools, and simplify the range of options when feasible.
- OneIT will partner with Facilities Management and other units to address specific needs for hoteling/shared spaces and online meetings:
 - Technology specs and equipment for hoteling/shared spaces
 - Scheduling systems for hoteling/shared spaces
 - Solutions for whiteboarding and other collaboration methods in virtual settings
- The university should consider an initiative to develop tools, skills, and support systems for managing large-scale online events (e.g., staff meetings, conferences).

Space management

Implementation teams and work groups should address these priorities:

- Finalize space-planning tools and templates, coordinating with the University Space Committee.
- Monitor data on adoptions of remote/hybrid work arrangements during the fall 2021 pilot and address space needs with units reporting especially high adoption of remote/hybrid work.
- Project additional space impacts, needs, opportunities, and constraints, working with the Council of Deans and the University Space Committee.
- Update the University Space Plan as needed to reflect adoption of remote/hybrid work. Revise space-management policies and procedures as needed, draft plans for managing new hoteling and shared spaces, and adjust space implementation and sequencing plans.

FUTURE OF WORK PARTICIPANTS

Steering Committee

- Cheryl Reardon (co-chair), chief human resources officer and associate vice president, University Human Resources
- Lois Geist (co-chair), associate provost for faculty and professor of internal medicine
- Kristin Bauer, associate board counsel and director of human resources/Merit systems, Iowa Board of Regents
- Joe Bilotta, directory of campus planning, Facilities Management
- Adam Burghduff, undergraduate student government representative
- Ann Byrd, deputy counsel, Office of the General Counsel
- Paul Esker, graduate student government representative
- Steve Fleagle, chief information officer and associate vice president
- Kristin Gilchrist, administrator, Department of Physiology, UI Health Care
- Susan Klatt, assistant vice president and university secretary, Finance and Operations
- Jennifer Lassner, associate vice president for research administration, Office of the Vice President for Research
- Gary Milavetz, executive associate dean and professor of pharmacy practice and science, College of Pharmacy
- Gautam Pant, associate professor of business analytics, Tippie College of Business
- Talinda Pettigrew, senior HR director, Division of Student Life
- Rob Piper, associate dean for research and professor of molecular physiology and biophysics, Carver College of Medicine
- Ana Rodriguez-Rodriguez, associate professor of Spanish and Portuguese, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Faculty Senate representative
- Diane Rohlman, professor of occupational and environmental health, College of Public Health
- Sara Sanders, dean and professor of social work, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
- Keith Saunders, director of state relations, Office of Governmental Relations
- Galen Schneider, executive associate dean and professor of prosthodontics, College of Dentistry
- Liz Tovar, interim associate vice president for diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Joni Troester (co-chair), assistant vice presidents and deputy chief HR officer, University Human Resources
- Ellen Twinam, senior HR director, UI Health Care
- Tanya Uden-Holman, associate provost and professor of public health
- Kevin Zihlman, assistant director, Intercollegiate Athletics, and vice president/president elect, UI Staff Council

Advisory Committee

- Genevieve Johnson (co-chair), senior application developer, Research Services, Information Technology Services
- Emily Kleinmeyer (co-chair), associate director of human resources, Office of the Provost
- Chris Annicella, human resources director, College of Education
- Kirk Banks, associate director, Facilities Management
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- Claudia Corwin, clinical assistant professor of internal medicine, Carver College of Medicine
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- Teri Schnelle, director of projects and partnerships, Division of Student Life
- Lisa Schumacher, senior education and compliance specialist, Office of the Vice President for Research
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- Susan Vos, associate dean of student affairs and clinical professor of pharmacy practice and science, College of Pharmacy
- Yashwant Prakash Vyas, assistant director of diversity resources, Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Mike Weaver, assistant to the vice president for research, Office of the Vice President for Research
- William Wise, budget/financial officer, College of Pharmacy

Faculty and Instructors Subcommittee

- Kristin Bauer, associate board counsel and director of human resources/Merit systems, Iowa Board of Regents
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