

FLEXIBLE WORK CASE STUDY: COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE

BACKGROUND

Unit Description

- 100 Staff
- ~40 faculty
- The college offers a three-year Doctor of Veterinary Medicine program through hands-on, evidence-based training and prepares graduates to be successful life-long learners and leaders of the communities they serve.

Types of Flexible Work Offered

- ✓ Hybrid Work Week
- ✓ Fully Remote
- ✓ Flexible Schedule
- ✓ Compressed Work Week
- ✓ Core Business Hours

Overview of Flexible Work in the College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM)

The start of the COVID pandemic, shortly after the CVM welcomed their first student cohort, necessitated the need for various types of flexible work. During the pandemic the CVM, like many university colleges and units, operated in a variety of ad hoc remote, hybrid and in-person work environments. In Summer 2022, the college formalized a policy and process for offering flexible work arrangements.

PLANNING FOR FLEXIBLE WORK

The CVM leadership team evaluated flexible work challenges and advantages that emerged from the necessity of implementing flexible work during the pandemic. The executive leadership team, working with area supervisors, developed a college policy and process for employees to request flexible work arrangements.

Area supervisors were asked to evaluate the types of flexible work arrangements that could be offered in their areas while ensuring that job duties and tasks are still performed. After

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determining the types of flexible work options in each area, supervisors met with employees to discuss the available types of flexible work, and the process for requesting a flexible work arrangement. Employees who were already working a remote or hybrid work schedule were required to submit a new request.

IMPLEMENTING FLEXIBLE WORK

How were flexible work options communicated in CVM?

An email was sent to CVM area supervisors announcing the college's guidelines and process for flexible work arrangements. Area supervisors met with staff, either individually or as a group, to discuss available flexible work options and the process for requesting a flexible work arrangement.

How have flexible work arrangements been documented in CVM?

CVM requires that the [HR Request and Agreement Form](#) be completed by the employee and approved by the employee's supervisor.

How often are flexible work arrangements revisited?

Supervisors are expected to review the agreements with their employees periodically and revise if needed.

How do you communicate flexible work arrangements when recruiting new staff?

Flexible work arrangements, if the job type allows, are discussed with potential employees during the interview process.

How do you encourage employee engagement and team collaboration with your flexible work arrangements?

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MONITORING SUCCESS & ENSURING SUSTAINABILITY

How do you monitor productivity in a flexible work environment?

Outcome based performance is determined by each supervisor regardless of where an employee performs their work. All employees are required to complete the duties and tasks associated with their job and meet performance expectations in both an office and flexible work environment.

What challenges has CVM faced while implementing flexible work?

Many CVM employees started working at the college shortly before or during the COVID pandemic when work practices had been modified based on the necessity of remote and hybrid work. In some cases, it was difficult to shift the expectations of when and how certain tasks, such as in person activities and student facing events, needed to be performed once the pandemic no longer necessitated modifications.

What solutions has CVM implemented to respond to these challenges?

The college's flexible work policy clearly states that employees are expected to complete all their normal work duties while on a flexible work schedule. Supervisors were supported by the college's HR staff to clearly communicate job expectations with employees, including the expectation that employees come to the office when needed to complete the functions of their job, even if those events or tasks happen on a day they are scheduled to work remotely. For example, the Student Affairs area requires employees to work on-site at least 2 days per week, however, an employee may be required to work on-site more than 2 days per week if there are events or other in-person duties that occur on off-site working days (e.g., candidate interviews, student meetings/events, required in-person training, etc.)

What resources or support have you found to be helpful while implementing flexible work?

The HR flexible work website, forms and guidelines have been helpful in planning and developing our internal policy and process for flexible work arrangements.

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What benefits have you observed from offering flexible work?

Offering flexible work arrangements have increased employee job satisfaction by supporting a work life balance.

After the pandemic many employees and job seekers have an expectation of some type of flexible work when applying for a job. Offering options for flexible work when the job allows helps in a competitive job market.

Who to contact with more questions?

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For official UArizona Guidelines, visit

Human Resources | [Flexible Work Guidelines and Resources](#)
Office of University Initiatives | [2022 Flexible Work Initiative](#)