**Admin Council Meeting Minutes**
July 18, 2022, 4:00-5:00 PM

Agenda

- College in-person/remote work policies for the academic year

Dean Keith Molenaar began the meeting at 4:00 p.m.

**College in-person/remote work policies for the academic year**
Dean Molenaar introduced and thanked representatives from the Engineering Staff Council (ESC) for their time and effort in drafting the "ESC Future of Work Proposal" (attached). He referenced the recent campus operating model as context for the proposal and the discussion.

- https://www.colorado.edu/today/2022/05/25/campus-leadership-announces-operating-model-updates
- https://www.colorado.edu/hr/work-modalities-schedules#expand-88322

As the discussion began to formalize our policies, he asked that we be sure to follow the campus Guiding Principles regarding the optimal work environment:

- Advance the mission of the campus and affected units
- Enhance and not detract from the student experience or research and creative work
- Include planning for impact on diversity, equity and inclusion
- Include planning for impact on sense of place, community and affinity
- Increase/maintain hiring, engagement and retention
- Support the health & wellness of our community
- Support responsible stewardship of resources
- Cultivate a work culture built on trust and productivity

Victoria Lanaghan, former ESC Chair, Kim Goho, former ESC Vice Chair, and Cameron Deverel-Rico, new ESC Chair, presented their findings from the recent survey that was completed by CEAS Faculty and Staff (see attached). The survey collected feedback about recent hybrid work modalities, including the Future of Work (FOW) Pilot (June 21, 2021 – May 15, 2022) and the Summer Hybrid Schedule (SHS) Pilot (May 16, 2022 – present). The results of the survey were used to write ESC's Proposal for the Future of Work, in addition to the needs of the staff, retention concerns, and meeting customer (student and faculty) needs. Details of the proposal can be found in the attached document.

A time of discussion followed the presentation, and overall, there was positive response to the proposal. With the positive response, Keith will send an official vote out to the Administrative Council with a plan to move forward. If the vote results require an additional meeting, one will be scheduled. The goal will be to have a final policy and college-wide communications out by the end of July, with an effective date of August 1 and everyone in compliance by August 22.

*Meeting adjourned at 4:57*

Engineering Staff Council
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **BOULDER**

# ESC Future of Work Proposal
**July 13, 2022**

## Background
ESC conducted a survey to hear feedback from the CEAS community about recent hybrid work modalities, including the Future of Work (FOW) Pilot (June 21, 2021-May 15, 2022) and the Summer Hybrid Schedule (SHS) Pilot (May 16, 2022 - present).

## Key Survey Results
The survey received 195 responses, 50 from supervisors and 145 from non-supervisors for a 73.5% response rate. Not every person answered every question.

### *Flexibility vs. Community*
Staff were asked to assess the impact of hybrid work modalities on employee retention, while taking into consideration both community and flexibility as needs of our employees. Of the 159 respondents to this question,

- 148 said that the availability of hybrid modalities impacts retention
- 110 called out flexibility as important to retention
- 13 called out community as a need that impacts retention
- 27 said directly that they would quit if they did not have a hybrid working option
- 8 said that hybrid modalities are not important to retention

Staff were asked how the hybrid pilots impacted their feeling of community within their units and CEAS. Written feedback was categorized into the following:

| | **Positive Impact** | **No Change** | **Negative Impact** | **Total** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Supervisors** | 14 (35%) | 15 (38%) | 11 (28%) | 40 |
| **Non-Supervisors** | 35 (30%) | 62 (53%) | 19 (16%) | 116 |

### *Benefits of Hybrid Work Modalities*
Staff were asked to describe what went well for them and their units during the pilots.

The most frequently noted things that went well, in order by prevalence:

- Increased focus and/or productivity on remote days
- Increased flexibility
- Less commute and cost
- Good communication amongst team
- Work/life balance

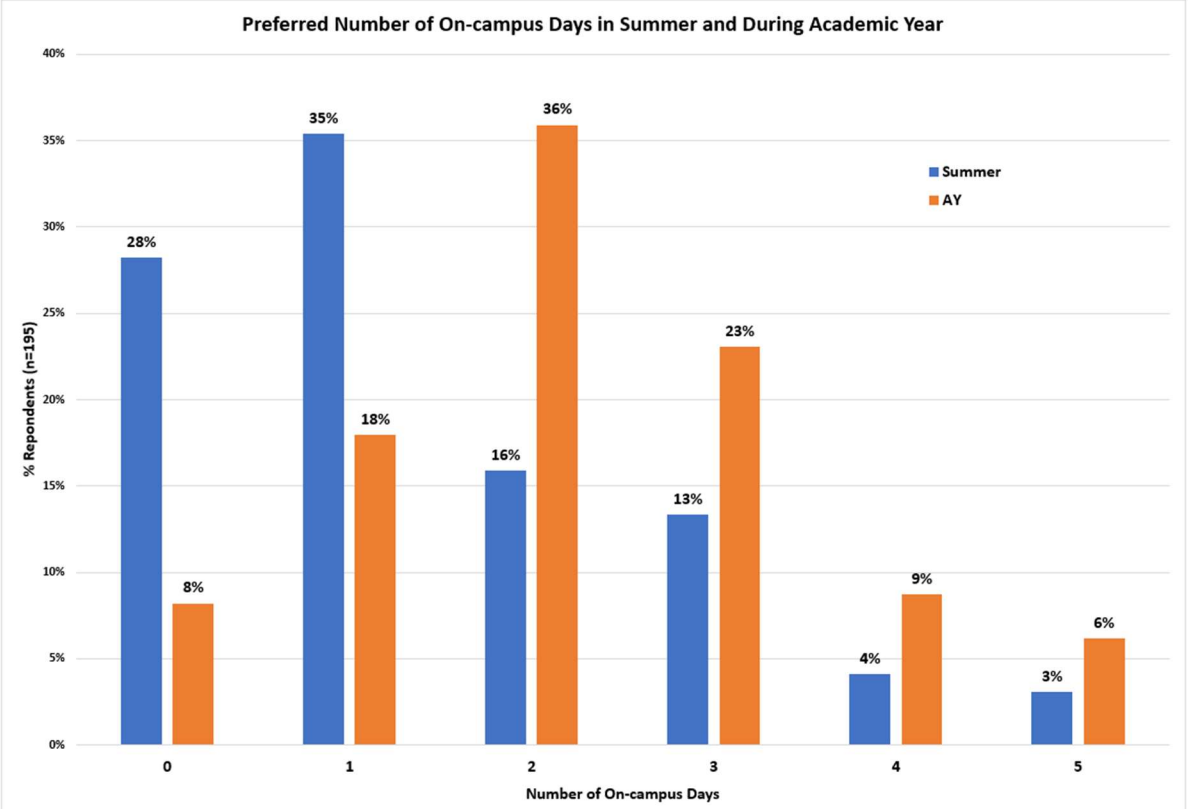
It was also noted that staff appreciate the flexibility that the SHS pilot provided to flex which days were on/off campus each week.

***Drawbacks of Hybrid Work Modalities***
Staff were asked to describe the drawbacks of these pilots for them and their units.

The most frequently noted drawbacks, in order by prevalence:

- "None"
- Having to come to campus "just because" and/or the burden of in-person days
- Lack of overlap with colleagues and/or quiet/lonely in office
- Inefficiency, tracking schedules
- Lack of flexibility to switch in-person days

***Days on campus vs. remote***
Staff were asked how many on-campus days would be best for them, taking into consideration personal preferences, job responsibilities, the needs of supported populations, and unit needs.



**ESC's Proposal for Future of Work**

Taking into account the needs of our staff, retention concerns, and meeting customer (students and faculty) needs, ESC proposes the following guidelines. At a high level, this proposal combines the mandatory in-person time of the FOW Pilot with the flexibility of the SHS pilot.

***Overall Policy***

- Per campus policy, student facing offices must be staffed during business hours
- 16 hours/week mandatory on-campus time, plus mandatory meetings as needed
    - 16 hours equates to two-day per week minimum, while allowing the flexibility to stretch this time over several days
- Common "core" working hours of 10:00 am-3:00 pm, excluding lunch
    - Staff are expected to be working, whether in person or remote, during these times to provide consistency for colleagues and the people they serve
    - Staff may flex other hours to accommodate their personal schedules, e.g. working 8am-3pm on campus, leaving at 3pm to pick up a child from school, then working 4:30pm-5:30pm remotely to conclude the workday
- Schedules managed at unit level
    - Staff provide supervisors/unit heads with typical plan for in-person/remote days, and can flex days with supervisor approval based on employee and unit needs

***Differentiated Policies***

- Summer policy: because of the low volume of students on campus in the summer, work modality should be entirely at the discretion of the individual unit
- 100% remote positions: in some circumstances, 100% remote positions can be considered for non-customer facing positions, subject to supervisor, unit head, and CEAS senior leadership approval. A formal policy may need to be created to assess and approve these circumstances.

***Recommended Best Practices***

- Unit-based weekly "Common Day" is highly recommended
- In-person team meetings are strongly encouraged
- Utilize student employees to help staff front desk of smaller units, to allow more flexibility for the staff members of these units
- Intentional community-focused initiatives, within units and at College level

***Desired Outcomes***

ESC hopes that the proposed policy above, in conjunction with the recommended best practices, will help CEAS and its employees maximize the benefits of hybrid work while meeting the needs of a complex, service-oriented organization. It is clear from the feedback summarized above that the flexibility of hybrid schedule is of vital importance to staff retention, and that a majority of staff feel that they can meet the needs of their jobs, their units, and the College while enjoying the benefits of a hybrid schedule. It is the belief of ESC that this flexibility should continue to be available for staff.

# FUTURE OF WORK

## Engineering Staff Council

- Goals
- Summary of Survey Responses
- Proposed Policy
- Recommended Best Practices

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# Goals

- Gather data on hybrid work modality pilots
  - Survey of CEAS staff
  - Faculty supervisor feedback provided from Cherie
  - ESC input
- Compile results
- Propose Future of Work Policy for CEAS
  - Aligning with campus guidelines
  - Acknowledging CEAS as service-oriented organization
  - Representing the needs of staff

- Goals
- Summary of Survey Responses
- Proposed Policy
- Recommended Best Practices

# FOW Survey

- 2 week response window
- 195 responses
  - 50 supervisors, 145 non-supervisors
  - Not all respondents answered every question
- Mix of qualitative and quantitative questions
  - Themes were identified in qualitative responses, and the feedback coded by these themes to identify common trends

# Value of Flexibility

Staff were asked to assess the impact of hybrid work modalities on employee retention, while taking into consideration both community and flexibility as needs of our employees. N=159.

- 148 said that the availability of hybrid modalities impacts retention
- 110 called out flexibility as important to retention
- 13 called out community as a need that impacts retention
- **27 employees said directly that they would quit if they did not have a hybrid working option**
- 8 said that hybrid modalities are not important to retention

“If I can find another job where I feel valued and respected while having the flexibility of working from home more often, I would do it without question.”

# Impacts to Community

Staff were asked how the hybrid pilots impacted their feeling of community within their units and CEAS.

Written feedback was categorized into the following:

| | Positive Impact | No Change | Negative Impact | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Supervisors** | 14 (35%) | 15 (38%) | 11 (28%) | 40 |
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# Benefits of Hybrid Work

Staff were asked to describe what went well for them and their units during the pilots.

The most frequent themes, in order by prevalence:

- Increased focus and/or productivity on remote days
- Increased flexibility
- Less commute and cost
- Good communication amongst team
- Work/life balance

It was also noted that staff appreciate the flexibility that the SHS pilot provided to flex which days were on/off campus each week.

“What worked well was having balanced time to tend to administrative and focused tasks while working from home and having interpersonal interaction and operational tasks while in person.”

# Drawbacks of Hybrid Work

Staff were asked to describe the drawbacks of these pilots for them and their units.

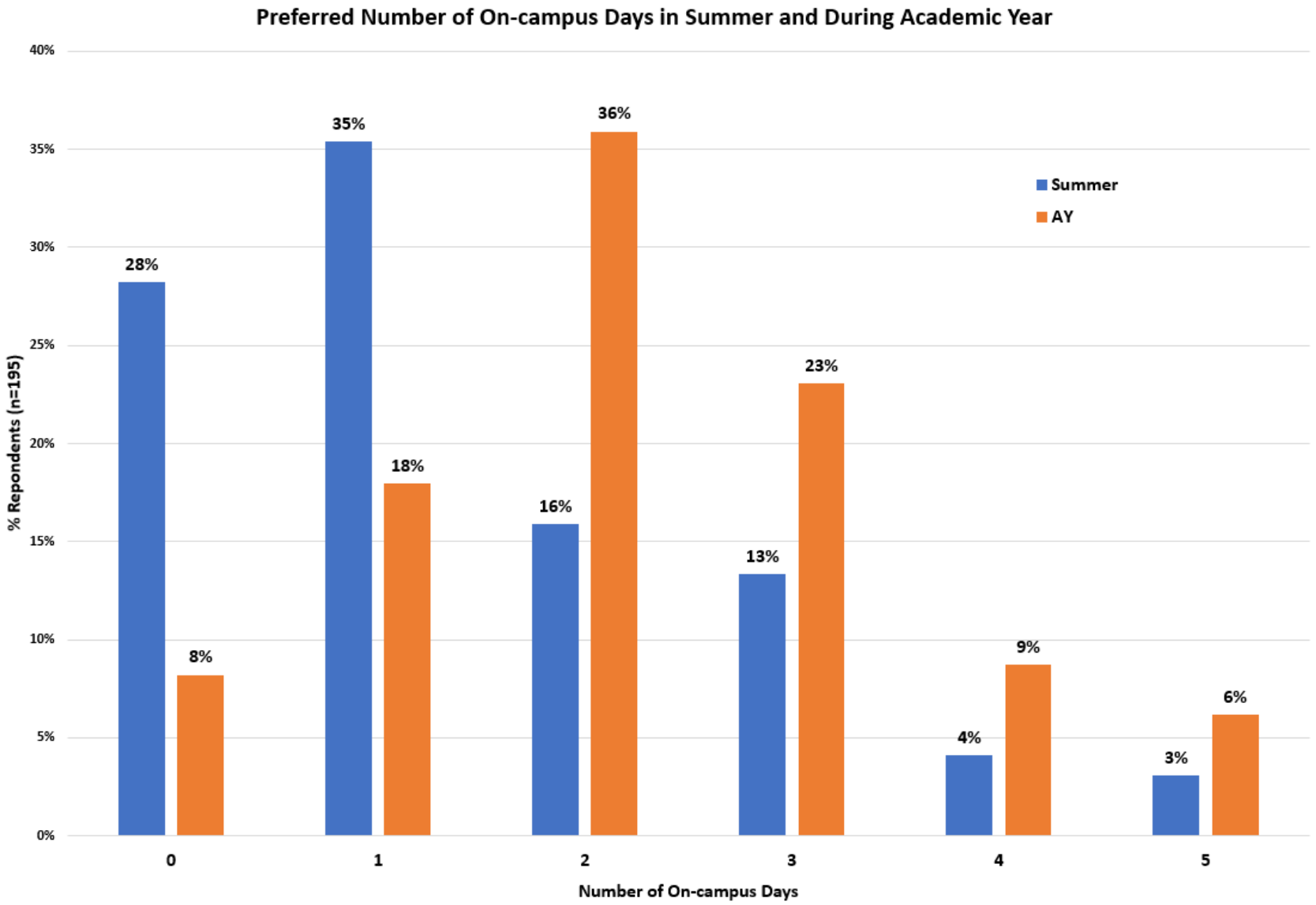
The most frequent themes, in order by prevalence:

- “None”
- Having to come to campus “just because” and/or the burden of in-person days
- Lack of overlap with colleagues and/or quiet/lonely in office
- Inefficiency, tracking schedules
- Lack of flexibility to switch in-person days

“I did not see any benefit from being on campus, my days on campus did not align with others so I ended up emailing coworkers anyway instead of personal interaction.”

# In-person vs. Remote Days

Staff were asked how many on-campus days would be best for them, taking into consideration personal preferences, job responsibilities, the needs of supported populations, and unit needs.



# Summary

- Flexibility top priority of staff
  - More likely to attend specific meetings or community building events if able to flex on-campus schedule
- Hybrid work modalities have not negatively affected sense of community for the majority of people
- Retention is likely to become a larger concern if hybrid options are not offered

“I think if we were forced to now come in every day or more than 2 days a week, it might make people leave as other jobs are even more flexible… Since salary cannot always be addressed, I think hybrid helps ease this. We need to utilize our other benefits.”

- Goals
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# Overall Policy

- Per campus policy, student facing offices must be staffed during business hours
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  - 16 hours equates to two-day per week minimum, while allowing the flexibility to stretch this time over several days
- Common “core” working hours of 10:00am-3:00pm, excluding lunch
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  - Staff may flex other hours to accommodate their personal schedules, e.g. working 8am-3pm on campus, leaving at 3pm to pick up a child from school, then working 4:30pm-5:30pm remotely to conclude the workday
- Schedules managed at unit level
  - Staff provide supervisors/unit heads with general plan for in-person/remote days, and can flex days with supervisor approval based on employee and unit needs

# Differentiated Policies

- Summer
  - Work modality should be at discretion of supervisor/unit
  - Low student volume
- 100% Remote
  - Should be considered for non-customer facing positions
  - Subject to supervisor, unit head, CEAS senior leadership approval
  - A formal policy may be needed

“I feel like the 2-day minimum for on-campus work was a good balance for my unit (advising) given the level of demand for in-person student appointments and other in-person meetings/events. It seemed like a good mix of being able to see people in person, but also enjoy the benefits of remote work (saving time/money spent on commuting, being more productive, etc.).

- Goals
- Summary of Survey Responses
- Proposed Policy
- Recommended Best Practices

# Recommended Best Practices

- Unit-based weekly “Common Day”
- In-person team meetings
- Utilize student employees to help staff front desk of smaller units, to allow more flexibility for the staff members of these units
- Intentional community-focused initiatives
  - Units level and College level

“I love and value the hybrid schedule. It honors work life balance and relieves burn out and work fatigue.”