

GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

RETURN TO COMMUNITY

Campus-Based Work & Continued
Support for New Approaches

SUMMER/FALL 2021



GRAND VALLEY
STATE UNIVERSITY
HUMAN RESOURCES

While the COVID-19 pandemic has transformed how the university and the rest of our community operates, you have persevered and adapted to be able to work in a more flexible and innovative environment. In an effort to create a more vibrant campus experience and return to the GVSU community for the upcoming Fall 2021 Semester, an increase in campus-based work is expected. We encourage you to think creatively, capturing this opportunity to develop new strategies to support your role, the roles within your department, and the university overall.

Though many members of the GVSU community have been working on campus to maintain essential functions, more faculty and staff who have been working remotely will gradually begin returning to their on-site community in the coming months. You should look to your supervisor or department head for specific direction in regards to on-site, remote or hybrid work situations, and the process for assessing campus-based needs. Returning to community work plans will be determined at the college, unit and department level, based on the needs of that specific area.

PHASED INTEGRATION & RECOMMENDATIONS

The current state's workplace restrictions does not prohibit in-person work, nor does it affect on-site campus work or plans to gradually increase on-site work in the coming months. As we prepare for the Fall 2021 Semester, each unit is responsible for evaluating and determining the operational needs and work responsibilities required in order to provide a successful transition to a robust on-campus experience. Appointing officers and unit heads are encouraged to communicate their plans with faculty and staff and embrace strategies to address new post-pandemic approaches to conducting work and rebuilding community at the university. As each area begins to explore how reintegration will look for them, the university encourages the following recommendations be considered:

- **Deans and appointing officers will work with their areas to devise appropriate staffing needs for the summer transition period and fall 2021.** Depending on the area and need, faculty and staff members will need to plan accordingly for in-person operations with their supervisors.
- **Faculty and staff who have been working and teaching remotely will begin to gradually increase their presence on campus.** Faculty should be available for university activities associated with the start of the academic year beginning August 6 ([per BOT 4.2.20](#)). Staff who have not yet been back to campus in-person are encouraged to begin gradually working their way up to more days on-site before August 6.
- **Each area and unit will have in-person representation as a part of the transition and work plan as it meets their needs.** For example, the Human Resources office will ensure a representative from each of its respective work areas is available on campus. Ultimately, each department needs to determine what will work best for their specific operational goals.

Returning to the campus community will look different based on the type of work each area is responsible for. What is the same, however, is that health protocols will continue to be in place. [Refer to the Lakers Together website](#) for up-to-date protocol information.

FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS (FWA)

Returning to work on campus for faculty and staff will require flexibility, creativity and collaboration by all colleges, units and departments to enhance the ways the university accomplishes teaching, research and service missions. As more faculty and staff return to campus, all are encouraged to continue to work on ways to identify opportunities that offer flexibility and improve the current work and community experience, while meeting the needs of the university.

Recommended Approach

Employees may work with their supervisor to enact a Flexible Work Arrangement (FWA). The nature of the job, work functions, and responsibilities as it meets operational goals will need to be considered. Supervisors and appointing officers are encouraged to continue to explore requests with goodwill, seeking to balance operational needs and the employee's ability to succeed.

Options may include continued partial or 100% remote work, staggered shifts, alternating week scheduling, and alternative times/days for work to be completed. Faculty are advised to [make arrangements with their unit head or dean](#) regarding flexible or remote teaching schedules.

- Priority should be given to establishing these agreements for faculty and staff as it meets the needs of the unit, overall university goals, and faculty or staff member. Use of these agreements for remote and hybrid work arrangements has been a long-standing practice in a number of units at GVSU, though not all.
- Out-of-state or international Flexible Work Arrangements (FWAs) are not permitted without the approval of Human Resources. FWAs are separate from out-of-state employment. For departments that are contemplating hiring an out-of-state employee, authorization is required by Human Resources prior to making an employment decision. Please contact Natalie Trent at trentnat@gvsu.edu.

Employees will need to submit their requests through the new online Flexible Work Arrangement workflow system (link will be available by end of June 2021). All FWA requests must be submitted through the new online system.

- Because this is a part of the process of ensuring that we have fully operational departments for a robust fall 2021 experience, it is recommended that supervisors, unit heads and appointing officers review and make a decision on all FWA requests submitted by employees by August 2, 2021.

Current COVID-19 100% remote work arrangements and/or FWAs that were in place prior to the spring of 2020 must be resubmitted through the new system for review.

On August 6, 2021, COVID-19 100% remote work requests will end and will no longer be available. It is expected that area work plans will be in effect at this time.

Should circumstances change, per CDC recommendations, the COVID-19 100% remote work request implementation will be revisited. Please note COVID-19 100% remote work requests are different than Flexible Work Arrangements, which were in place prior to the pandemic and continue to be available.

AREA WORK PLANS

By July 30, 2021, it is expected that deans and appointing officers will have created an area work plan focused on their staffing needs, reviewed it with their executive officer, and communicated the final plan with faculty and staff. **Work plans are expected to be in place for August 6, 2021, and beyond.**

THINGS TO CONSIDER

Innovation <<

Though a gradual increase of campus-based work is expected, the university community is encouraged to think creatively, capturing the opportunity to develop innovative strategies to support overall university goals.

Variations in Plans <<

Variations in area work plans are expected depending on the operational needs of each department and work duties. Many departments already have and have had some presence on campus. Their work plans may look different from offices that were completely remote.

Vaccinations & Face Coverings <<

For guidance on in-person meeting arrangements, staffing, and inquiring about vaccination status of students or employees, please refer to the [Lakers Together website](#) for the most up-to-date information and protocols.

Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment (FFE) <<

If individuals have university property at home and will need the equipment back on campus, it is the responsibility of the faculty or staff member to return it to GVSU. Please contact Jim Flanders (flandeji@gvsu.edu) or Paul Nederveld (nedervep@gvsu.edu) in Facilities Planning for furniture related questions. Please contact IT Services (616-331-2101; it@gvsu.edu) at least one week in advance if you would like to schedule in-person assistance with an IT technician to help set up your computer, monitor(s), and/or printer.

Mental & Behavioral Health Considerations <<

As faculty and staff transition back to the workplace, keep in mind that it may not be easy for you or for others. Supervisors, unit heads, deans and appointing officers are encouraged to review and share resources to support mental and behavioral health. GVSU faculty, staff and students alike are resilient and strong, but are in various stages requiring support for the transition ahead. For advice on how to manage emotions that may arise from returning to work, faculty and staff are advised to take time to [review the mental and behavioral health support resources](#) available for faculty and staff at GVSU.