

Flexible Work Arrangements Guidelines  
Dietrich School of Arts & Sciences  
College of General Studies  
Updated January 2020

The following flexible work arrangement guidelines have been developed in accordance with University of Pittsburgh policy 07-04-01, Hours of Work – Time Records/Attendance/Overtime and Compensatory Time. Among other things, the policy states the following: *A variety of flexible working schedules, altering starting and quitting times, lunch hours, days of the week worked, or number of hours worked per day, may be initiated at the discretion of the department administrator. Schedules may be arranged to allow employees to attend classes. In all cases, full-time exempt and non-exempt employees are expected to work a total of 37 1/2 hours per week.* These guidelines describe the flexible options available to units and departments and the way in which unit supervisors may initiate flexible work arrangements. In all cases, specific arrangements must be approved by the Division Administrator, senior staff leader, and/or the Dietrich School Dean's Office prior to the start of the arrangements.

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The Dietrich School recognizes that flexible working arrangements may offer a variety of benefits to both departments and to individual staff members. Potential benefits include improving recruitment and retention of staff; reducing sick time; increasing productivity; increasing the overall availability of staff to serve departmental needs; and improving morale.

Administering flexible work arrangements also presents a number of challenges. This includes, first and foremost, ensuring that the department's needs will be met via any flexible work arrangements. Flexible work arrangements cannot be guaranteed to any staff member, and they must be reviewed and approved in a manner that is fair and transparent. Managers and employees alike will be responsible for ensuring that faculty, students, and other staff members have confidence that a flexible work arrangement is not negatively impacting productivity.

Flexible work arrangements can take a number of forms:

- *Flex time*, where the hours worked in a day are shifted earlier or later than the standard 8:30am to 5:00pm schedule; the workweek is shifted outside of the standard Monday through Friday; and/or the lunch period is reduced from one hour to one-half hour;
- *A compressed work week*, where an employee shifts from a traditional 5-day work week by compressing hours into a shorter number of days while maintaining the required 37.5 minimum hours;
- *Remote Work*, where an employee spends part of their standard schedule working from home.

### **General guidelines on flexible work arrangements**

Units that wish to offer flexible work arrangements to their staff must adhere to the following general guidelines:

- Appropriate leadership stakeholders, including supervisors, Directors, Chairs, and/or Division Administrators, must be supportive of offering flexible work arrangements. Flexible work arrangements should be reviewed at least annually to ensure that arrangements are effectively meeting support needs. Changes may be made at any point based on support needs.

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- The primary consideration in offering flexible work arrangements must be ensuring that the support requirements in the units served will not be negatively impacted by the arrangements. Optimally, flexible work arrangements should improve productivity.
- Units must maintain sufficient support coverage during standard University business hours. Conflicts in choice of individual schedules will be resolved by the supervisor. Collaborative arrangements among two or more departments, technological solutions, use of student employees may be considered to provide sufficient coverage.
- Units wishing to offer flexible work arrangements must develop a plan for offering and implementing the arrangements. The plan must be approved by the Dean's Office in advance of implementation. Not all forms of flexible work arrangements may be appropriate in all responsibility areas.
- Staff members wishing to take advantage of flexible work arrangements must make a written request to the supervisor and have it approved in advance of starting any new arrangements.
- If a staff member is placed on a Performance Improvement Plan, their eligibility for flex time will be at the discretion of the supervisor.
- In general, a staff member's schedule should remain consistent from week to week. Staff members must publicize their schedules so faculty, students, and co-workers are aware of the staff member's standard hours. It is recognized that some staff members may have responsibilities for which periodic and temporary changes in the standard schedule would be a benefit to the support the staff member provides (e.g. coordinating a major event in the evening or on a weekend). In these cases, a shift in schedule should be discussed with and approved by the supervisor in advance of the week during which the shift occurs. Timecards submitted should reflect the schedule worked.
- Staff members requesting flexible work arrangements in order to accommodate taking courses during normal University business hours must seek appropriate approval prior to registering for any courses. Requests for such accommodation will only be considered if the staff member is enrolled in a degree-seeking program for which the course is a requirement and if no other course options (for either the specifically requested course or another required course) are available outside of normal University business hours.
- Requests for flexible work arrangements are not guaranteed to be approved. Approval will be based on a variety of factors, including the unit's needs and an employee's responsibilities, past performance, and need for close supervision.
- Flexible work arrangements may be altered or revoked at any time based on unit needs or employee performance. When a schedule needs to be altered based on unit needs, the supervisor should make a reasonable effort to provide advance notice to the employee.
- There will be an initial probationary period for any flexible work arrangement of one month during which the new work arrangement will be closely monitored. If for any reason the work arrangement does not meet the unit's needs, adjustments will be made or the arrangement will be terminated. Following that, the arrangement must be assessed at least annually and appropriate adjustments made.
- Supervisors will be held accountable for monitoring flexible work arrangements, making adjustments as appropriate to meet support needs, and immediately and effectively managing any performance problems associated with flexible work arrangements.

### **Guidelines for Flex Time**

- Regardless of an employee's start and end times, the overall standard work hours for University employees may not be reduced.

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- Employees may request to reduce the standard lunch period from one hour to one-half hour. Employees may not request to eliminate the lunch period.

### **Guidelines for Compressed Work Weeks**

- Regardless of an employee's start and end times, the overall standard work hours for University employees may not be reduced.
- Employees may request to reduce the standard lunch period from one hour to one-half hour. Employees may not request to eliminate the lunch period.
- Employees who work a compressed work week are responsible for determining how inquiries and issues related to their areas of responsibility will be addressed on regular work days when the employee is not available. This must be approved by the supervisor.
- Sick, personal, and vacation time must be taken in hours equivalent to the employee's approved schedule (i.e. if an employee's approved schedule is 4 days x 9.375 hours/day, then any sick, personal, or vacation day must be reported as 9.375 hours). When partial days are taken, appropriate hours should be recorded based on work time missed.
- When a University holiday falls on a designated work day, the employee is granted only the standard 7.5 hours for the holiday. Vacation or personal time must be used to supplement a full day off. When a University holiday falls on a designated non-work day, full-time employees are granted 7.5 hours as a floating holiday that may be used within one week before or after the scheduled holiday, with the supervisor's prior approval. This applies only to University holidays and not to recess days.

### **Guidelines for Remote Work**

- Remote work arrangements should be approved only after careful consideration of an employee's responsibilities and performance. Staff members who are offered the option of working remotely must be highly motivated, self-directed, and able to work independently.
- Staff members who work remotely must be accessible during a standard set of work hours via telephone, email, instant messenger, and other appropriate methods of communication, and they must have continuous access to appropriate equipment required to perform their duties (e.g. a computer).
- Staff members who work remotely and their supervisors must be especially cognizant of University policies and guidelines on maintaining the confidentiality of information.
- Staff members who work from home are responsible for ensuring that they have appropriate equipment and space to carry out their responsibilities. Staff members may not request to have specialized equipment purchased for them for the sole purpose of facilitating a remote work request. The University will not be responsible for home operating or maintenance costs associated with working remotely.
- Remote work arrangements may not be used as a substitute for obtaining appropriate child or family care.
- Staff members who receive approval from their supervisor to work remotely must sign a Remote Work Agreement before the arrangement can begin.