

Implementing a Hybrid Work Model in a University Medical Library

By Tess Grynock¹, Kathleen Downing², Robert Vander Hart¹, Becky Baltich Nelson¹, Catherine Carr¹, Morgan Kolinski¹, and Margot Malachowski³

1. *Lamar Soutter Library, University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School*
2. *National Public Health Coordination Office*
3. *Network of the National Library of Medicine, Region 7*

Abstract

Like many libraries, the University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School Lamar Soutter Library adopted a hybrid work model when returning to onsite work after being remote during the COVID-19 Pandemic. To inform this model, a Hybrid Work Environment Team used existing metrics, a literature review, and surveyed staff on how they felt about hybrid work. Most Library staff stated that 75%-100% of their work could be completed remotely and the most popular onsite schedule was two or three days a week. The hybrid work model provides benefits of both remote and onsite work and hopefully mitigates the drawbacks of both.

Implementing a Hybrid Work Model in a University Medical Library

Introduction

In 2020, many people were required to work remotely for the first time due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. When institutions began to re-open, employees experienced mixed emotions about returning to work in-person. The Lamar Soutter Library (LSL) at the University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School (UMass Chan) went fully remote on March 16, 2020. The Library re-opened with Access Services staffing on August 7, 2020, and a portion of staff voluntarily worked a hybrid schedule. Prior to the Pandemic, the front desk was staffed seven days a week. LSL reduced front desk hours to five days a week when the Library reopened. LSL required the remaining staff to start hybrid schedules in August 2021. This was in accordance with UMass Chan's policy that individual departments develop their own hybrid work policies within the scope of the university-wide Work from Home Policy. At the time of the survey, most staff worked onsite three days a week and offsite for two days a week. The Network of the National Library of Medicine (NNLM) staff at LSL worked onsite one day a week. Before developing the LSL's hybrid work policy, LSL Administration wanted feedback from staff on their six-month experience of remote work and staff's thoughts and concerns about returning to an onsite staffing model.

The Library needed to consider not only staff work location changes but also changes in the uptake for Library services as the UMass Chan community also shifted to hybrid work. The students at UMass Chan are all medical students or graduate students. Most students are not on campus five days a week because they are working while taking graduate classes, out on clinical rotations, or only come to campus when there are in-person classes or lab work. UMass Chan research staff and faculty have similarly adopted a hybrid work schedule depending on their department's policy. The library space is also available via badge access to eligible UMass Chan and UMass Memorial patrons 24/7. Most questions were asked virtually prior to March 2020 but the difference between the number of in-person and virtual questions grew after the University's shift to hybrid work. When comparing the October 2021-February 2022 to October 2019-February 2020 time periods, the number of online questions increased by 34% and the number of in-person questions decreased by 24%. Prior to March 2020, most

online and in-person questions came in on Monday and Tuesday; this stayed true for online questions in 2022. Most in-person questions shifted to Wednesdays. In terms of the content, most in-person questions were about access, circulation, directional, general, or technology whereas online questions were primarily reference and access/circulation. Education and outreach sessions also moved primarily online whereas, prior to 2020, these sessions were entirely in-person. The amount of foot traffic in the Library and the number of circulation events also decreased overall in the October 2021-February 2022 time frame as compared to October 2019-February 2020. Library staff were the frontline witnesses to these changes and could best identify the impact these changes had on their work.

The Hybrid Work Environment Team (HWET), a task force made up of non-managerial Library staff, was formed in May 2022 to identify hybrid work models and make recommendations to Library Administration. In addition to existing Library metrics and evidence from the literature, the task force was interested in learning how LSL staff felt about hybrid work presently and in the future.

Literature Review

Hybrid work, working a combination of onsite and offsite hours, is not a new concept. However, it is a new and not well-studied topic in library science scholarship, so a multi-disciplinary literature search was conducted with the literature databases available to library staff. The following databases were searched for documents on hybrid work: Gale OneFile: Business, PsycINFO, PubMed, Scopus, and CINAHL. The HWET also solicited articles on hybrid work from staff. The task force's initial review of the literature returned only nine documents which mentioned hybrid work in libraries out of the sixty-five documents screened (Figure 1).

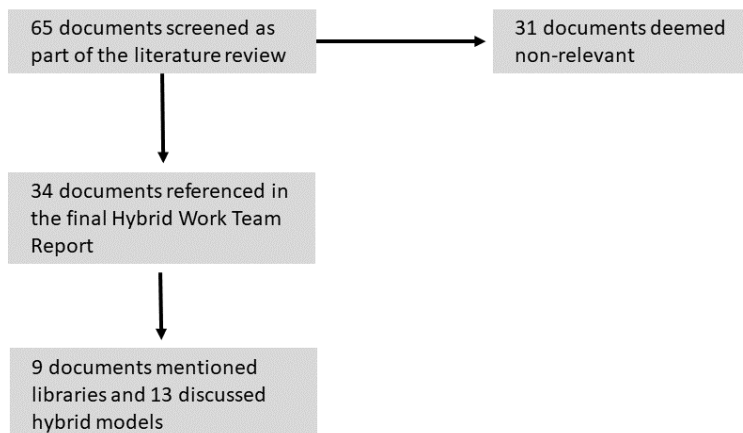


Figure 1. Literature reviewed by the Hybrid Work Environment Team.

The HWET identified nine existing hybrid work models in the literature. The models have different ratios of onsite and offsite work. The models differ in who determines the scheduling and in the overlap between individuals and teams within the workplace. All the models are quite similar and not yet well-defined or tested. The model which provides the most autonomy for employees and the most remote time is the **Remote First Model** which expects employees will primarily work remotely and work onsite when they choose (Harris, 2020). The global document productivity software company, Nitro, implemented this model with their “Flexible Forever” policy in 2020 (Nitro Team, 2021). The **At-**

Will/Dynamic Choice Model expects employees to spend days in the office, but they can choose which days they come into the office (Fowell, 2022; Harris, 2020). The preferred time spent onsite for employees is based on several factors: number of years spent on the job (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2021), office setup at home and in the office, commute time, and type of work (Green, 2022). This preference may shift over time as circumstances change, requiring organizations to be flexible. The **Individual Commitment Model** requires employees to commit to remote or onsite work when they start a position (Harris, 2020). This model reflects the fact that some employees prefer to work onsite.

The remaining six models have employee schedules determined by factors other than solely personal preference. For teamwork, it may be valuable for whole teams to be onsite together. The **Manager Scheduling/Empowering the Teams Model** empowers team managers to choose which days their team comes into the office (Fowell, 2022). This type of coordination can be done at a company level as seen in the **Split Week Model** (Fowell, 2022). The chunks of time designated for onsite work is defined in the **Week-By-Week Model** where teams are assigned work weeks when they need to work onsite (Todd, n.d.) or the **Variable Category Model** where employees must work onsite part of the year and can work offsite during the non-operational part of the year (Rayner, 2021). The only hybrid model found in the literature review that based the amount of time employees should work onsite as an institutional value is the team defined **Service First Model**. This was also the only article on hybrid models that used a library as an example. The University of Manchester Library adopted this model and empowers team leaders to determine the onsite/offsite work ratio to meet the objective of “service delivery comes first” (Rayner, 2021). The final model we found, the **Office First Model**, is the opposite of the Remote First Model and expects that employees will work primarily in the office and work remotely rarely (Harris, 2020).

Employee expectations are shifting (Lederman, 2022; Microsoft, 2022; Westfall, 2022). The Pandemic demonstrated that much work could be done remotely at higher education institutions. Natalie McKnight attested for this at Boston University and Bryan Garey at Virginia Tech (Lederman, 2022). The staff at UMass Chan, and in the Library specifically, learned that much of their work could be done remotely, and many staff wish to continue having some remote days. This has implications for workplace culture. According to Capterra’s Culture Survey, remote employees no longer desire a “socially centered workplace” with only 11% of the 1,000 employees surveyed ranking relationships with co-workers as a top factor in job satisfaction (Westfall, 2022). At the same time, human resource leaders are reporting less toxic workplaces (Westfall, 2022). It is unclear how this would play out in a hybrid work environment where employees are remote for only a portion of their work hours. Some valued aspects of work remain the same whether remote or onsite, including “engagement, supervision, belonging, sense of mission, feeling that work is valuable, that you’re getting valued for the work you do and appreciation” (Lederman, 2022).

A hybrid work schedule provides the best of both onsite and remote work (Chafi et al., 2022). It provides increased flexibility for employees (Boogaard, 2021b; HubSpot, 2022) to determine their work schedule during remote workdays and helps them achieve a better work-life balance (Akhter, 2022; Fowell, 2022; Lederman, 2022). Employees can work where and when they are most productive (Fowell, 2022; Lederman, 2022). Providing a hybrid work option increases the hiring pool as more candidates look for positions with remote days (McMurtrie & Ostrikov, 2021). It can draw candidates who may have a longer commute. Institutions can save on real estate as less office space is needed to accommodate fewer people in the office on any given day (Fowell, 2022). While there are many benefits to hybrid

work, there are equally as many concerns. Some of these concerns have been investigated in studies or addressed at institutions. Early in the Pandemic, one of the concerns was how employees could maintain productivity while working from home. Many companies and institutions attest that productivity was not an issue and some even saw an increase in productivity among remote workers (Barrero et al., 2021; Lederman, 2022). If documentation of work is needed, a ticketing system is one solution that can be implemented by libraries (Crane, 2022). Communication with a partially remote workforce can also be difficult. Leaders can use the opportunity to reimagine communications and still set expectations and regular check-ins with employees (Lederman, 2022). Hybrid work affects work culture, but what that looks like has not been discussed in the literature to date. Concerns are raised about inequity between onsite and offsite employees and that offsite employees might miss out on opportunities and informal side-conversations (Pullan, 2022). Additional information technology security measures are also required for remote workers (von Gravrock, 2021). Each institution must weigh the benefits and costs of hybrid work to see if it will work for them. See Table 1 for a summary of the pros and cons.

Table 1. Summary of pros and cons of hybrid work

Pros	Sources	Cons	Sources
Less toxic workplaces	Westfall, 2022	Change in sense of belonging	Lederman, 2022
Increased flexibility for employees	Boogaard, 2021b; HotSpot, 2022	Harder to track productivity levels	Crane, 2022
Better work life balance	Akhter, 2022; Fowell, 2022; Lederman, 2022	Communication issues	Lederman, 2022
Work where/when they are most productive	Fowell, 2022; Lederman, 2022	Inequities between onsite and offsite workers	Pullan, 2022
Improves hiring pool	McMurtrie & Ostrikov, 2021	Enhanced information technology security measures needed	von Gravrock, 2021
Save on real estate costs	Fowell, 2022		
Increase in productivity	Barrero et al., 2021; Lederman, 2022		

(Barco, 2022; Fowell, 2022). Depending on the hybrid model adopted, this policy may include the number of days required to work onsite; circumstances which require onsite work; expected response rate for communications; and how to communicate work hours. Managing remote employees requires trust and a shift to focusing on output rather than hours worked (Crane, 2022). Intentional communication is crucial for team cohesiveness and hybrid work. When staff cannot walk by a colleague's office to chat, they must rely on intentional emails, messages, and meetings to ensure information is being conveyed sufficiently. For managers, this includes offering and soliciting feedback (Boogaard, 2021a). Providing opportunities for social connection and wellness continues to be important in a hybrid workspace to help build a cohesive team (Boogaard, 2021a; Fowell, 2022; Neeley, 2022). A hybrid model is not possible without technology in place. Management must ensure that all employees have access to the necessary technology such as webcams, headsets, microphones, etc. (Herrick & Diaz, 2022; Neeley, 2022). The onsite space can be adapted to hybrid work. Recognizing that onsite staff will need to regularly attend online meetings means providing space for them to do so (Fowell, 2022; Herrick & Diaz, 2022). Depending on the hybrid model adopted, the onsite workspace

may be the main site of collaborative meetings. Staff will need a space set up to accommodate that need (Caglar et al., 2020; Fayard et al., 2021; Knoll, 2017a). One way that institutions have changed their space when moving to a hybrid model is providing hoteling spaces—desks that are empty or have a general technology set up that employees can reserve for a time (Caglar et al., 2020; Herrick & Diaz, 2022; Knoll, 2017b). Overall, the biggest key to success of any team, hybrid, remote, or onsite, is to establish a common purpose (Perkins, 2022).

Methods

In addition to the literature review above, the Survey Subgroup (SSG), a subset of the HWET, developed a survey to gather LSL employees' experiences and opinions of hybrid work. The survey included ten multiple choice questions, and twenty-one open response questions (three short and eighteen long) on categories including wellness, space, technology, and communication (Appendix A). HWET piloted the survey, testing it for meaning, clarity and technical errors. The survey was distributed in late June 2022, ten months after the return-to-work date, to all thirty-four LSL employees (managers and staff), including the eleven employees of the NNLM. The survey was accompanied by an email stating full responses would be confidential and not shared with anyone outside the SSG. Recipients had eighteen days to respond. The responses were analyzed by the SSG who wrote a report summarizing the responses to maintain the confidentiality of the respondents. Multiple choice questions were tallied, and themes were extracted from the long form responses to preserve the anonymity of respondents.

Results

Demographics and Work

The survey had a response rate of 79% with 27 of 34 people responding. Respondents included managers and staff including 9 (33%) from the NNLM.

Several survey questions asked about offsite and onsite work, and the pros and cons of each arrangement. When asked to estimate the percentage of work that could be completed offsite, 20 (74%) respondents said "75-100%" (Table 2).

Table 2. Library staff's estimated percentage of work that can be completed offsite (n=27).

Percentage	Number of Responses
0-24%	1
25-49%	3
50-74%	3
75-100%	20

Most respondents indicated they were satisfied with their current job with 77% responding as "Very Satisfied" or "Satisfied" (Figure 2).

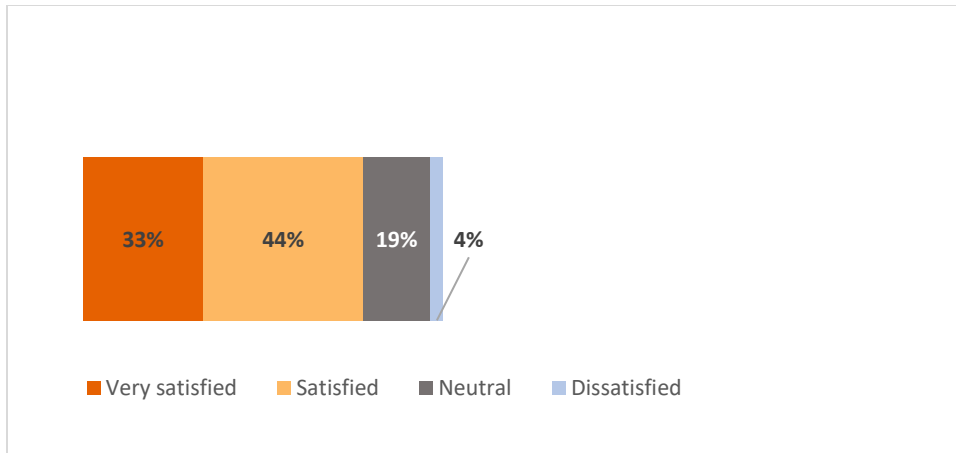


Figure 2. Library staff job satisfaction (n=27).

When asked about their ideal number of days onsite, the most popular options were two days and three days with 6 (22%) respondents each and the next most popular option was “As needed” (5, 19%) (Table 3). Of respondents able to work offsite, half (13) of the respondents indicated they would like to work one to four days a week onsite whereas the other half (13) indicated they would like to work onsite one day or less a week with 10 respondents indicating a preference of coming into the office less than once a week.

Table 3. Ideal number of days onsite for Library staff (n=27).

Days Onsite	Number of Responses
5 days a week	0
4 days a week	1
3 days a week	6
2 days a week	6
1 day a week	3
0 days a week	2
As needed	5
1-2 days per month	2
Monthly or bimonthly	1
Not applicable	1

Respondents were asked about benefits and drawbacks of offsite and onsite work (Table 4). The biggest benefit of onsite work was connection to colleagues, while the biggest drawback onsite was more interruptions and distractions. Offsite work provides the benefits of greater control of the work environment and greater flexibility in the hours worked, but technology issues were the greatest drawbacks offsite.

Table 4. Benefits and drawbacks of onsite and offsite work as reported by Library staff (n=27).

	Onsite	Offsite
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connection to colleagues (67%) • Better technology (30%) • Easier access to IT (11%) • Easier to end workday • More productive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater control in work environment and greater flexibility in hours worked (56%) • Fewer interruptions/ distractions (37%) • No commute time (37%) • More productive (22%) • Better work-life balance (19%) • More comfortable (15%)
Drawbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More interruptions/distractions (44%) • Difficult to find private spaces (26%) • Commuting (26%) • Physical work environment issues: e.g., temperature (19%) • Masking requirement (7%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology issues: no printer, VPN issues, using personal phone for work (40%) • Slower response rate from colleagues (22%) • Loss of interactions with colleagues and patrons (22%) • Personal office set-up not ideal (19%) • More interruptions/ distractions (11%) • Blurring boundaries of home/work (7%)

Wellness and Communication

The next sections of the survey focused on personal wellbeing and the effects that working remotely had on respondents. Positive impacts of remote work included improved health and flexibility for non-work tasks such as chores and medical appointments. Negative impacts on wellness included less contact with colleagues, less exercise, and difficulty setting work/home boundaries. Twenty-six percent of respondents wrote that they were not negatively impacted at all by remote work. When asked about a shift in their work/life balance since starting to work from home, 74% of respondents answered “Yes, for the better” (Table 5).

Table 5. Library staff shift in work/life balance since starting to work from home (n=27).

Shift	Number of Responses
Yes, for the better	20
Yes, for the worse	2
No change	5

Regarding preferred modes of communication while working from home, the most popular were Zoom meetings (100%), email (96%), and Microsoft Teams chat (78%) (Table 6).

Table 6. Library staff's preferred modes of communication while working from home (n=27).

Communication method	Number of Responses	Percentage
Zoom meetings	27	100%
Email	26	96%
Microsoft Teams chat	21	78%
Microsoft Teams calls	19	59%
Phone calls	9	33%
Texting	9	33%
Other	2	7.4%

Respondents gave a higher satisfaction rating for how much communication they received from their manager while working from home than how much communication they had from Library Administration (Figure 3). Eighty-nine percent of respondents answered either “Completely satisfied” or “Somewhat satisfied” for communication with managers, while 74% of respondents were “Completely satisfied” or “Somewhat satisfied” with communication with Library Administration.

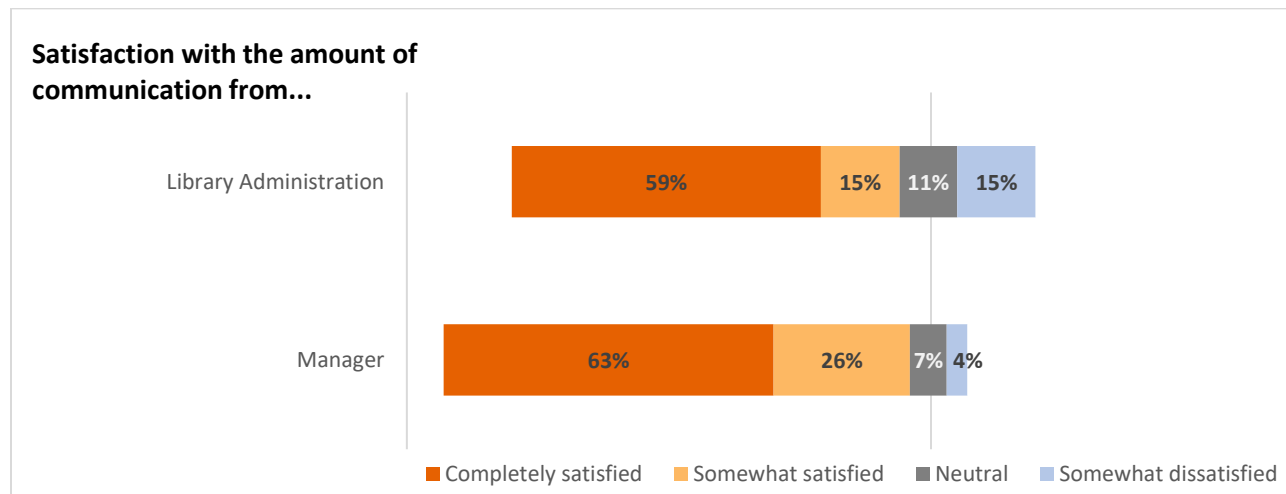


Figure 3. Library staff's satisfaction with the amount of communication from their manager and Library Administration while working from home in percent.

When it came to respondents' connection to their department and the Library when working from home, 89% said they felt either “Very connected” or “Somewhat connected” with their department, but only 41% reported feeling the same levels of connection with the Library (Figure 4).

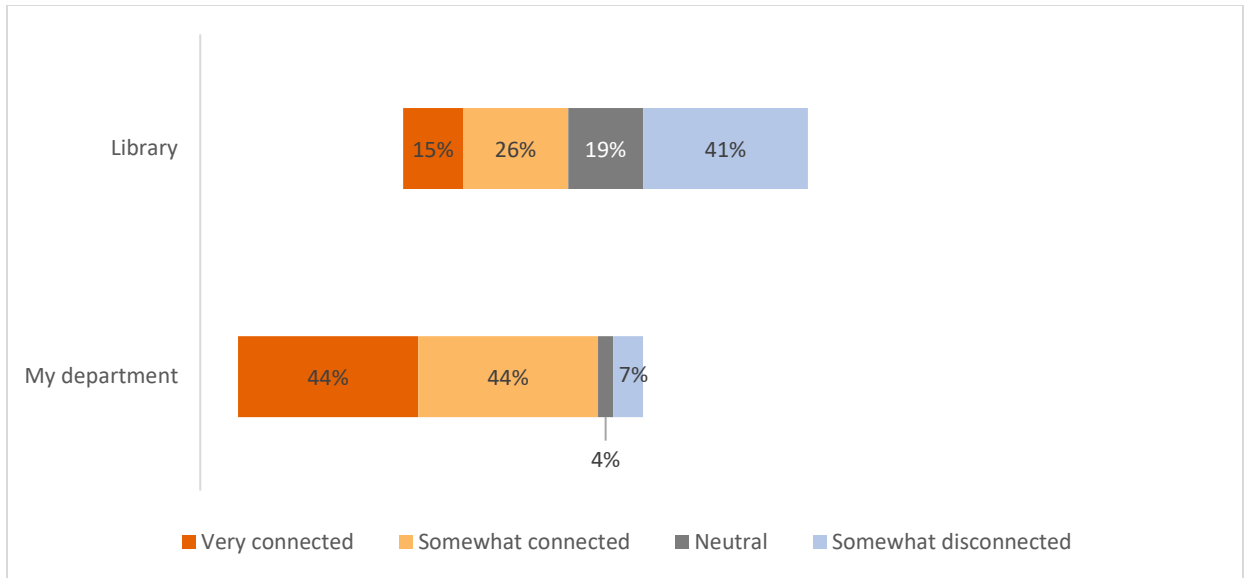


Figure 4. Level of connection Library staff felt to the Library as a whole and their department while working from home.

Space and Technology

For survey questions about “hoteling,” or “hot-desking,” the arrangement was defined as “the elimination of assigned seating in a workspace which allows members to, on a daily basis, reserve office space that suits the type of work they need to do”. Most staff responded that they would be okay with hoteling/hot-desking (48%) (Figure 5). The most frequently mentioned concerns were about storage of work-related and personal items including security (30%), the need for privacy (22%), and the availability of spaces when needed (19%). Other concerns were related to cleanliness of spaces, the availability of necessary technology in a hoteling/hot-desking space, and the desire for personalization of the spaces.

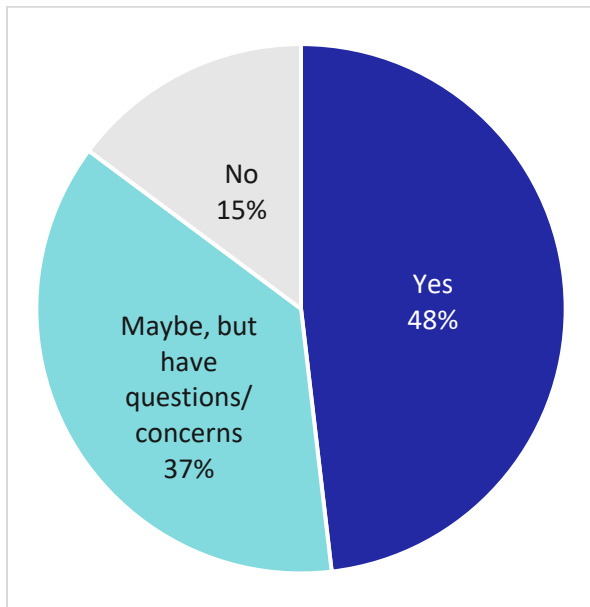


Figure 5. Library staff responses to “Would you be okay with shifting to hoteling/hot-desking?” (n=27).

When asked to list what physical space or technology respondents would need to have in a hoteling/hot-desking arrangement, 85% mentioned personal locked spaces for work-related and personal items, and 81% also listed private space for meetings (both in-person and virtual) and phone calls. Other items listed were standing desks and dual monitors in all hoteling/hot-desking stations.

LSL employees were also asked about the technology issues they experienced during both onsite and offsite work. For onsite work, the most frequently mentioned technology issues were Wi-Fi connections (33%) and lack of cell phone coverage (30%). However, 30% reported few or no technology issues onsite. The most frequently mentioned technology issues offsite were Wi-Fi problems (44%) and accessing network drives (22%). More respondents reported technology issues while offsite with only 22% reporting no technology issues. Other offsite technology problems included having to use a personal laptop, lack of an ergonomic setup, and difficulty getting office phone calls to route to personal cell phones.

Discussion

The Lamar Soutter Library staff who responded to the survey largely had a positive view of hybrid work and most were satisfied with their current job. Many said that 75% or more of their work could be completed offsite. This opinion is shared by many other academic medical and health sciences librarians in the United States, with most librarians surveyed by Petersen, Covey, and Crum (2023) indicating that more than half of their work could be completed remotely. The most popular hybrid schedule indicated by LSL respondents would be onsite work two or three days a week. There was almost an equal number of respondents who wanted to come onsite less than once a week. An onsite schedule of three days a week is in line with the hybrid work schedules of other academic health sciences librarians. Most who responded to the Petersen, Covey, and Crum (2023) survey held a position that allowed remote or hybrid work on a regular basis, and the most common hybrid schedule they found was three to four days onsite per week. Recent Gallup surveys of the wider US remote-capable workforce indicate a strong preference for hybrid work. This is likely to be an ongoing and growing work schedule (Gallup, Inc., 2023).

Hybrid work allows an employee to take advantage of the benefits of both onsite and remote work. Hybrid workers benefit from connection with colleagues when onsite, and they benefit from increased focus and flexibility when working remotely. When working onsite, connecting with colleagues could cause interruptions and distractions from work that requires extra focus. While Akhter (2022) noted employees had stronger connections when working together onsite, other sources attributed connectedness to effective communication and cultures that emphasized experience, inclusion, and collaboration, and not employees' location or "live" interaction (Hubspot, 2022, Aijazi 2022). Concerns of missing out on conversations, opportunities, and activities mentioned by Pullan (2022) were not raised by LSL staff in the survey. Some, but not all, employees reported a better work environment and more flexibility when working remotely. Both work locations also have their drawbacks. When working remotely, more technology issues were noted, and it was harder to get Information Technology (IT) help. Interestingly, the most common technology issue for both onsite and offsite was Wi-Fi. While UMass Chan does not provide stipends to improve home internet for remote and hybrid employees, they are upgrading the campus Wi-Fi. If the survey was repeated, the number of onsite Wi-Fi issues may be reduced. Most, but not all, employees noted an improved work-life balance since starting to work from home. Similar improvements to work-life balance was also noted by Akhter (2022), Fowell (2022), and Lederman (2022). Improvements in productivity that Fowell (2022) and Lederman (2022) espoused were also noted in our survey results. The potential lack of librarian visibility to patrons was one of the

concerns of hybrid work expressed by one survey respondent. This was a unique perspective that we did not see in the literature though this may be due to the limited library literature on hybrid work.

The HWET's charge was to "smooth the transition from a completely remote work environment to a long-term hybrid arrangement" and to identify hybrid work models with the pros and cons of each model. The Team was asked to research and apply best practices to an assortment of operational problems associated with hybrid work. Based on the literature review, survey results, and review of Library statistics, a Service First model (Rayner 2021) was recommended. The Service First model highlights the best service to users as the Library's primary mission. Individual teams should prioritize service when they make decisions about hybrid schedules. Prioritizing service echoes the Lamar Soutter Library's core value of Service Excellence that "puts the aspirations, needs, and success of our University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School community at the center of all we do" (Lamar Souter Library Mission, Vision, Values 2022). Once service was established as the priority when planning hybrid work, the HWET was able to apply information found in the literature review that related the type of work to the amount of time that workers should be in the office. This model grouped jobs into four roles based on responsibilities: Collaborators, Rovers, Connectors and Residents. Roles were determined by the time each job needed to be in the office based on equipment needs, front facing customer support, external and internal meetings, need for a fixed space, and travel demands (Caglar 2020). By grouping library jobs into one of Caglar's (2020) roles, managers could determine the amount of time that each role needed to be in the office. This approach, in tandem with the Service First Model, was flexible enough to accommodate different job types within the Lamar Soutter Library and hybrid scheduling while providing insight into the decision-making process behind hours worked remotely.

One of the operational problems associated with hybrid work is communication. Even in our survey, respondents noted a slower response rate from colleagues when working offsite. To address communication preferences while working remotely, a greater emphasis on using Teams as a preferred communication method for the Library was discussed at an all-staff meeting. Managers were tasked with using Teams within their departments. Reminders were issued to staff to use Teams and to look there for additional information on Library topics. All preferred modes of communication are provided by campus IT and were favored over using a personal phone. Utilizing these preferred modes could increase responsiveness. LSL staff were generally satisfied with the amount of communication from managers and Library Administration but there is room for improvement. Additionally, the survey results indicated a need to build greater connections between departments in LSL. Staff generally felt more connected to their department than with the whole Library. More deliberate action is needed to build connections among staff from different departments when staff are working remotely because there is not a shared physical space to encourage serendipitous interactions.

While almost half of the staff responses indicated they would be fine with adopting a hoteling model, they did raise concerns regarding how hotel desks would work and be maintained. After the survey closed, a small portion of staff space was redesigned, and two hoteling spaces were created based on recommendations from the survey and HWET. The desks in the NNLM staff space were changed to hoteling spaces as the team continued to work remotely most of the week. Provisions were put in place to ensure all needed technology was available and the hotel space was cleaned for the next user. The hoteling desks are the primary desks for staff that work most of the week remotely. A best practices document was developed to help address the concern of cleanliness in the space. Three privacy booths were added so that staff can hold meetings in a soundproof environment. This addresses the need for

private spaces. The hotel desks and private spaces are reserved through the LSL's LibCal booking system to ensure availability. To date, there have been no instances where there was not enough space for all staff. Lockers are a potential solution to storing personal and work items at the office. The option of moving all staff to a hoteling model is still in discussion. Feedback on the current hoteling spaces may affect future Library renovations.

In libraries, one of the equity concerns with hybrid work is that many front desk and circulation staff are required to be onsite to complete their job. As a result, they miss out on the benefits of hybrid work. The literature mentions hybrid and remote work as expanding the pool of candidates for positions to improve recruitment and diversity (Crane 2022) and opening doors to candidates with a range of abilities (McMurtrie & Ostrikov, 2021). However, not all work can be performed remotely, and institutional policy may dictate who can work remotely. UMass Chan policy prohibits remote work for employees that work less than twenty hours per week. In the LSL, per diem library assistants are limited to nineteen hours per week as unbenefited employees and thus not allowed by University policy to be remote. Coupled with the per diem staff being needing to be onsite, having a lower starting pay than most staff positions, and having the greatest interaction with Library patrons throughout the Pandemic – raising concerns of COVID transmission, these positions continue to experience the highest rate of turnover in the Library.

In 2022, there was limited research on hybrid models in libraries. Articles on hybrid models outlined similar approaches to schedules and time spent in the office and offered little critique or analysis. In the future, as hybrid work becomes more pervasive and more research emerges, these models may solidify and be easier to distinguish. The lack of literature on hybrid work models in libraries may be due to the recent inception of this work model in the profession and the lag time of publication. Or it may reflect a post-COVID work environment that is still in flux. This lack of library literature also means one of the operational concerns, visibility of the library, is not found in the literature. While our survey provides some feedback on the hybrid work model, its findings are limited to the institutional context of a library at a medical university.

Conclusion

The hybrid work model is currently effective for the LSL and continues to evolve based on staff feedback and as work conditions change. Some outcomes of the HWET's report are a new onboarding document, new hybrid staffing model implemented in November 2022, group lunches with the Library director, and further discussions about visibility in a hybrid work environment and workplace culture of the Library.

As more institutions explore, implement, and adjust their hybrid workplace models, more articles and studies should be published about their experiences. Our report would have benefitted from more findings on the short and long-term impact of hybrid work on the workplace, employees, and workplace culture. Revisiting the literature review for new articles on hybrid work may provide additional models and feedback on institutions' experiences with hybrid work. One potential area of future research is the impact of hybrid work on hiring practices. While Crane's blog post states that hybrid work "dramatically expands the pool of candidates" (Crane 2022) which results in more diversity, further analysis is needed to verify this and understand the potential impact on library hiring practices.

Reassessing the remote work model adopted by the LSL is considered an important part of the HWET's recommendations and should be done annually. An overall theme in the literature is that hybrid work,

including scheduling, is dependent upon the needs of the organization and the employees. There is no “one-size-fits-all” model (HubSpot, 2022). Organizations need to be flexible and evaluate changing needs to support their employees and required work. As the library workforce changes, new hires may have different attitudes towards working remotely. A desire to be in the office to learn and network with new colleagues may emerge (Deziel, 2021). Hybrid work policies could be impacted by the changing needs of the library, changes in university policy, and an overall change in societal attitudes toward being in the office. Re-surveying library staff for opinions on the hybrid work model that was instituted and whether their opinions on hybrid work have changed is always beneficial.

In conclusion, libraries have a unique view of hybrid work as a service organization that benefits from “face time” with its patrons and a field where hybrid work was a rarely practiced model prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic. The effects of offering hybrid work on hiring and equity in the workplace are ongoing issues to be explored as the hybrid work model continues in libraries.

Bibliography

Akhter, M. (2022, April 26). Benefits and disadvantages of the hybrid work model. Envoy.

<https://envoy.com/blog/pros-and-cons-of-hybrid-work/>

Barco. (2022, January 25). Employees feeling the burdens of meeting inequality in the hybrid work environment. Barco press releases. Retrieved July 16, 2024 from

<https://www.barco.com/en/about/press-releases/2022-01-25-employees-feel-the-burdens-of-meeting-inequality>

Barrero, J. M., Bloom, N., & Davis, S. J. (2021). Why Working from Home Will Stick. National Bureau of Economic Research. <https://doi.org/10.3386/w28731>

Boogaard, K. (2021a, February 19). How To Successfully Manage a Hybrid Model Team. A Blog for Teams by Trello. <https://blog.trello.com/manage-a-hybrid-model-team>

Boogaard, K. (2021b, July 30). Advice From Companies That Are Hybrid Model Pros. A Blog for Teams by Trello. <https://blog.trello.com/advice-from-companies-that-are-hybrid-model-pros>

Caglar, D., Faccio, E., & Ryback, E. (2020, July 29). Creating the office of the future. Strategy+business.

<https://www.strategy-business.com/article/Creating-the-office-of-the-future>

Chafi, M. B., Hultberg, A., & Yams, N. B. (2022). Post-pandemic office work: Perceived challenges and opportunities for a sustainable work environment. Sustainability (Switzerland), 14(1). Scopus.

<https://doi.org/10.3390/su14010294>

Crane, J. T. (2022, January 10). Remote and Hybrid Work. RIPS Law Librarian Blog.

<https://ripslawlibrarian.wordpress.com/2022/01/10/remote-and-hybrid-work/>

Deziel, G. (2021). Disruption as innovator; the future of work & the hybrid model. VT Public Library HR Minute. https://www.uvm.edu/sites/default/files/UVM-Extension-Cultivating-Healthy-Communities/HR-MINUTE_-_the_unfolding_hybrid_work_model_March_2021.pdf

Nitro Team. (2021, October 21). Why employees never want to give up remote work. Nitro Blog.

Retrieved July 16, 2024 from <https://www.gonitro.com/blog/why-employees-never-want-to-give-up-remote-work>

Fayard, A., Weeks, J., Khan, M. (2022, Mar-April). Designing the Hybrid Office. Harvard Business Review, 2021 March-April, p. NA. <https://hbr.org/2021/03/designing-the-hybrid-office>

Fowell, T. (2022, May 11). What is hybrid work and why do employees want it? Envoy.

<https://envoy.com/blog/what-is-a-hybrid-work-model/>

Gallup, Inc. (2023). Indicator: Hybrid Work. Gallup.Com. <https://www.gallup.com/401384/indicator-hybrid-work.aspx>

Harris, M. (20, September 30). Is hybrid work the future of the workplace? Envoy.

<https://envoy.com/blog/hybrid-work-future-of-the-workplace/>

Herrick, D. R., & Diaz, J. B. (2022). Technical Design of Computer Hoteling Stations for a Hybrid Work Modality. 30–33. Scopus. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3501292.3511588>

- HubSpot. (2022). 2022 Hybrid Work Report. HubSpot.
https://www.hubspot.com/hubfs/HubSpot%202022%20Hybrid%20Work%20Report_FINAL.pdf
- Knoll. (2017). Unassigned Workspace Etiquette: Introducing Policies, Protocol and Politeness. Knoll.
<https://www.knoll.com/knollnewsdetail/unassigned-workspace-etiquette>
- Lamar Soutter Library. (2022). Mission, Vision, Values | Lamar Soutter Library—University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School. Retrieved June 27, 2022, from
<https://library.umassmed.edu/about/mission-vision-values#mission>
- Lederman, D. (2022, January 5). The Era of Flexible Work in Higher Education. Inside Higher Ed.
<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2022/01/05/era-flexible-work-higher-education-has-begun>
- McMurtrie, J. C., & Ostrikov, K. (2021). Hybrid participation options to mitigate discrimination and maximize productivity in post-COVID higher education and research workplaces. *Physical and Engineering Sciences in Medicine*, 44(2), 339. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13246-021-01017-y>
- Microsoft. (2022, March 16). Great Expectations: Making Hybrid Work Work. WorkLab.
<https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/worklab/work-trend-index/great-expectations-making-hybrid-work-work>
- Neeley, T. (2022, January 14). Tsedal Neeley on Why We Need to Think of the Office as a Tool, with Very Specific Uses. <https://hbr.org/video/6291838438001/tsedal-neeley-on-why-we-need-to-think-of-the-office-as-a-tool-with-very-specific-uses>
- Perkins, K. M. (2022, March 1). How To Unify a Hybrid Workplace with Purpose as The Centerpiece. Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/kathymillerperkins/2022/03/01/how-to-unify-a-hybrid-workplace-with-purpose-as-the-centerpiece/>
- Petersen, D., Covey, M., & Crum, J. (2023, May 18). Analyzing Changes in Work-from-Home Policies for Academic Medical and Health Sciences Librarians. Medical Library Association Annual Meeting, Detroit, MI.
- PricewaterhouseCoopers. (2021, January 12). It's time to reimagine where and how work will get done: PwC's US Remote Work Survey. PwC. <https://www.pwc.com/us/en/library/covid-19/us-remote-work-survey.html>
- Pullan, P., (2022, Spring). How to Make Hybrid Work, Through Inclusion of All, ITNOW, Volume 64, Issue 1, Spring 2022, Pages 56–57, <https://doi.org/10.1093/itnow/bwac029>
- Rayner, S. (2021, October 19). Introducing hybrid working at the Library. StaffNet.
<https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/news/display/?id=27117>
- Todd, S. (n.d.). Five Types of Hybrid Work Models (And How to Implement). Open-Sourced Workplace. Retrieved August 31, 2022, from <https://opensourcedworkplace.com/news/types-of-hybrid-work-models>

von Gravrock, Einaras. (2021, March 30). Navigating cybersecurity in a hybrid work environment. Forbes. Retrieved July 16, 2024 from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesbusinesscouncil/2021/03/30/navigating-cybersecurity-in-a-hybrid-work-environment/>

Westfall, B. (2022, March 17). Working from home is making company culture less toxic. Capterra. Retrieved July 16, 2024, from <https://www.capterra.com/resources/remote-hybrid-toxic-work-culture/>

Appendix A

2022 LSL HYBRID WORKING ENVIRONMENT SURVEY

Required questions indicated with “*”

SECTION 1

1. Are you a part of the RML/NPHCO? *
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
2. Are you a supervisor? *
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

SECTION 2

3. What is the estimated percentage of your work that can be completed offsite? *
 - a. "Enter your answer" (Short answer)
4. What would be your ideal number of days **onsite**? *
 - a. 1 day per week
 - b. 2 days per week
 - c. 3 days per week
 - d. 4 days per week
 - e. 5 days per week
 - f. "Other" (Short answer)
5. How would you rate your current job satisfaction level? *

"I am:"

 - a. Very Satisfied
 - b. Satisfied
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Dissatisfied
 - e. Very Dissatisfied

SECTION 3

6. When you work **offsite**, what aspects of your work and workflow change for the better? *
 - a. "Enter your answer" (Long answer)
7. When you work **offsite**, what aspects of your work and workflow become more difficult? *
 - a. "Enter your answer" (Long answer)
8. When you work **onsite**, what aspects of your work and your workflow change for the better? *
 - a. "Enter your answer" (Long answer)
9. When you work **onsite**, what aspects of your work and workflow become more difficult? *
 - a. "Enter your answer" (Long answer)

SECTION 4

10. How many **minutes** is your average daily roundtrip commute to campus? *

- a. "Enter your answer" (Short answer)
- 11. How many **miles** is your average daily roundtrip commute to campus? *
- a. "Enter your answer" (Short answer)
- 12. How has working remotely positively impacted your personal wellbeing and life outside of work?
Please identify at least three positive impacts. *
- a. "Enter your answer" (Long answer)
- 13. How has working remotely negatively impacted your personal wellbeing and life outside of work?
Please identify at least three negative impacts. *
- a. "Enter your answer" (Long answer)

SECTION 5

- 14. Since we started working from home, has your work/life balance shifted at all? *
- a. Yes, for better
- b. Yes, for worse
- c. No change
- 15. Please expand upon your answer if you'd like to.
- a. "Enter your answer" (Long answer)

SECTION 6

Hoteling/Hot-desking Definition:

The elimination of assigned seating in a workspace which allows members to, on a daily basis, reserve office space that suits the type of work they need to do.

- 16. Would you be okay with shifting to hoteling/hot-desking? *
- a. Yes
- b. Maybe, but have questions/concerns
- c. No
- 17. If you have concerns please tell us: *
- a. "Enter your answer" (Long answer)
- 18. If we were to shift to a hoteling/hot-desking arrangement, what physical space or technology needs would you have? (examples: personal filing cabinet or locker, private space for calls/Zoom meetings, etc.) *
- a. "Enter your answer" (Long answer)

SECTION 7

- 19. What technology issues do you experience when you are onsite? *
- a. "Enter your answer" (Long answer)
- 20. What technology issues do you experience when you are offsite? *
- a. "Enter your answer" (Long answer)
- 21. What technology (hardware or software) that you currently lack would be useful to have in the office for permanent hybrid work? *
- a. "Enter your answer" (Long answer)

22. What technology (hardware or software) that you currently lack would be useful to have at home for permanent hybrid work? *
- “Enter your answer” (Long answer)

SECTION 8

23. What modes of communication do you prefer while working from home? (Select all that apply) *
- Email
 - Teams chat
 - Teams call
 - Phone calls
 - Texting
 - Zoom meetings
 - “Other” (Short answer)
24. Please specify if you’d like additional training on any of these communication tools.
- “Enter your answer” (Long answer)
25. Are you satisfied with the amount of communication you have with your manager and Library Administration while working from home
- With Manager:
- Completely Satisfied
 - Somewhat Satisfied
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat Dissatisfied
 - Completely Dissatisfied
- With LSL Administration:
- Completely Satisfied
 - Somewhat Satisfied
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat Dissatisfied
 - Completely Dissatisfied

SECTION 9

For Supervisors Only

Please skip ahead if you are not a supervisor

26. **For supervisors: Please** describe your experience coaching a hybrid team, and identify any successes and/or challenges.
- “Enter your answer” (Long answer)
27. **For supervisors: What** physical space, technology, and personal support do you need in order to manage a hybrid team?
- “Enter your answer” (Long answer)

SECTION 10

28. How connected do you feel with your department and to the LSL while working from home? *

“With LSL as a Whole:”

- a. Very Connected
- b. Somewhat Connected
- c. Neutral
- d. Somewhat Disconnected
- e. Completely Disconnected

“With My Department:”

- a. Very Connected
- b. Somewhat Connected
- c. Neutral
- d. Somewhat Disconnected
- e. Completely Disconnected

29. What has worked well to keep your team cohesive in a hybrid model? Is there anything that hasn't worked well?
- a. “Enter your answer” (Long answer)
30. In your own words, how would you describe the current workplace culture at the Lamar Soutter Library? *
- a. “Enter your answer” (Long answer)

SECTION 11

Final Thoughts

31. Do you have any other thoughts about hybrid work that you'd like to share? (About your particular position, the impact on the library, or anything else that's on your mind.)
- a. “Enter your answer” (Long answer)