

Remote Work & PTO Flexibility **Guidance for Faculty**

The University's collective bargaining agreement with Local 33 (Agreement) allows Graduate Workers (GW) to request to work remotely or on a hybrid schedule on a temporary or permanent basis. This memorandum is intended to provide an overview of the Agreement's remote work provisions as well as practical guidance concerning the management of GWs who work remotely.

Remote Work

Article 17 of the Agreement outlines the contractual obligations and rights of both the University and GWs with respect to remote work. It includes the following points:

- GWs may request to work remote/hybrid on a temporary or permanent basis.
- All such requests must be submitted to and approved by their supervisor, and then must be approved by the Dean of the applicable school, or their designee.
- The University will maintain its practice of allowing GWs to perform certain work, such as grading or preparation for teaching, remotely.

Note: If a GW's request for remote work is connected to a disability accommodation, the matter should be referred to Student Accessibility Services for consideration.

Additional Points to Consider When Assessing Remote Work Requests

- Absent extraordinary circumstances, including an emergency closing of the University, all teaching must be performed in-person/on-site.
- GWs who are authorized for remote work must perform their assignments effectively and efficiently.
- Determination of remote work eligibility must be based on the GW's assignment/position and operational feasibility, not the GW's preference.
- While some research work may be performed remotely (e.g., computational research work), in-person learning, instruction, and collaboration are core University values and are valid reasons to deny or limit remote work requests.
- Per the Agreement the University will provide GWs with supplies and materials required for them to complete their work, without charging a fee. Of note, the University is not required to provide a separate set of materials solely for use during remote work.
- GWs who do not own a personal technological device (laptop, monitor, etc.) to complete their work may request a University-owned one for the duration of their assignment (please note that the University is not required to purchase new equipment; instead, it is only obligated to loan devices if one is available).

Remote/Hybrid Work Expectations/Best Practices

- GWs who work remotely are expected to maintain their availability during standard business hours (as defined by the Agreement) for their assignment.
- GWs working remotely must maintain appropriate levels of production and quality.
- Faculty members may take reasonable action to assess GW's productivity while working remotely, including:
 - asking the GW to record their daily work activity in a journal or spreadsheet.
 - requesting the GW to provide a sample of the completed work.
 - asking the GW questions about their remote progress.
- If a GW's performance is unsatisfactory while working remotely, the supervisory faculty member may revoke their approval.
- Faculty may identify specific days that are not eligible for remote work due to operational needs (e.g., team meetings).
- Faculty may modify or discontinue a remote work assignment due to a change in operational needs. In such cases, GWs should be given as much advance notice as possible.
- It is recommended that faculty document, via email or other written communication, all remote work assignments, including any related understandings (e.g., remote work may only occur on certain days, or for particular types of assignments), to avoid misunderstandings.

Additional Remote Work Guidelines

Whether working remotely or on-site:

- GWs are responsible for the physical security of University-issued equipment and may be held responsible for loss or damage to University equipment that is caused by the GW's negligence or misconduct.
- All University equipment remains University property and must be returned to the University at the conclusion of the GW's work assignment.
- If the GW suspects any form of data breach while working remotely, they should take immediate steps to notify the University.

PTO and Schedule Flexibility in the L33 Contract

Article 25 of the Agreement provides that the University shall continue to observe "flexible practices around paid time off and approval of time off, where they exist".

The term “flexible practices” used in this context may mean:

- Allowing a full-time Salaried Research Assistant to work on a University holiday(s) or other regular days off in exchange for an additional PTO for use at some other time during the same academic year.
- Allowing hourly GWs to modify their work schedules with the approval of their supervisors to accommodate requests for time off.
- Granting reasonable requests from any GW to change their schedules or PTO to accommodate observation of religious and cultural holidays not observed by the University.

Additional Points to Consider Regarding Flexibility

- GWs serving as TFs cannot utilize PTO during days when they are expected to perform their teaching or grading duties, except in cases of necessity (e.g., illness, accident, etc.)
- Specific requests for flexibility may be approved or denied by faculty based on operational needs.
- It is strongly recommended to document any individual or group flexibility arrangements to avoid misunderstandings.

Resources

If you have questions regarding the eligibility, implementation, or requirements of the remote work policy or PTO flexibility guidelines, you may reach out to L33managment@yale.edu.