

UTEP Faculty Remote Work Policy for Full-Time Faculty

Working Document

Purpose

The purpose of the *Remote Work Policy* is to document decisions related to remote work for full-time UTEP faculty members. Many learning experiences require faculty presence on campus. Indeed, the physical presence of faculty advances UTEP's academic community, encourages vibrant campus life, makes use of the extensive physical infrastructure and investment including lab-based equipment, and supports our culture of care, opportunity, and inclusive excellence.

As outlined in UTEP's *2030 Strategic Plan*, the University's strategic advantages are related to our place, the unique diversity of our people, our culture of care, our community engagement, and our strong partnerships. We build on those strategic advantages through our commitment as a community of scholars to foster a culture that promotes a scholarly community for all faculty, including support for mentoring, active engagement with colleagues and students, and opportunities for professional development and leadership.

Policy Statement

UTEP is a comprehensive public research university that is increasing **access** to **excellent** higher education. We advance discovery of public value and positively **impact** the health, culture, education, and economy of the community we serve. We meet this mission as an engaged academic community for teaching, learning, service, research, creative activity, clinical practice, and administration fueled by full-time faculty members who are regularly physically present on campus.

UTEP faculty are expected to participate fully in the life of the intellectual community of the campus and to fulfill their obligations in each domain of responsibility assigned (e.g., teaching, service, research or creative activity, clinical or professional practice, administration). Substantial remote work by UTEP faculty is permitted only in exceptional cases when it is in the best interests of the University, and must be expressly approved by the Chair, Dean, and Provost. Even when remote work is permitted, faculty must be able to perform all aspects of each domain of responsibility assigned with integrity, excellence, responsiveness, and timeliness. In this policy, remote work refers to faculty who do not maintain a significant physical presence on-campus. Please note that this policy is not intended to address or affect academic travel and absences from campus for normal research, professional service, or off-campus instructional activities assigned by UTEP.

In assigning faculty workload, including the location and mode of instruction, the relevant dean and department chair/program director must ensure the above principles are supported. Additionally, in determining how instruction, research or creative activity, and service will be conducted, individual faculty should ensure they are supporting the above principles. Requests for remote work as an accommodation for a disability will be addressed through UTEP's accommodations request process with the [Equal Opportunity Office, in accordance with the Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities Policy](#).

Policy Procedure for Exceptions

1. The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) makes the final decision as to whether and to what extent remote work is an option for faculty. The President or the President's designee makes the final decision as to whether out-of-country-remote work is approved.
2. The Provost and VPAA may delegate the authority to approve and implement remote work arrangements to Deans.
3. The Provost and VPAA, in consultation with the Vice President of Business Affairs, will make a recommendation to the President whether to approve out-of-country remote work. Such approval will only occur if it is mission-critical. If approved, the unit must cover any additional costs related to the remote work arrangement to maintain compliance with the applicable tax, labor laws, and other policies.
4. Only the Provost and VPAA, or their delegate, in consultation with the Vice President of Business Affairs is authorized to approve out-of-region remote work. If approved, the unit must cover any additional costs related to the remote work arrangement to maintain compliance with the applicable tax, labor laws, and other policies.
5. A remote work arrangement is an exception to UTEP's expectation that faculty will be regularly available on campus, as described above. Remote work is not a right of an academic appointment and will not be available to all appointees; rather, a remote work arrangement is at the discretion of the Provost and VPAA or delegate.
6. For any and all remote work that involves online teaching assignments, faculty must follow UTEP's Distance Learning and Teaching Policies, receive course approval by the faculty member's respective department, and have completed and received approval of the [Online Course Development Agreement](#).
7. Assignment of a faculty member to a remote work arrangement does not set a precedent that the appointee will always be working under a remote work

arrangement. Faculty members cannot premise a request for a remote work assignment on a comparison of how other units implement remote work arrangements, or on a remote assignment of a colleague within their own unit.

8. The Provost or Provost's assigned delegate retains the authority to modify or discontinue a remote work arrangement.
9. Noncompliance with this policy may result in modification or discontinuance of a remote work arrangement, may be reflected in faculty evaluations, and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination in accord with applicable procedures.

Considerations for Decision-makers

Before the implementation of a remote work arrangement requested by a faculty member, the decision-maker must consider the following, as well as any aspects of remote work that are unique to the relevant college/school and department/program.

1. Documentation: Remote work arrangements must be memorialized with a memorandum that addresses the following aspects of each remote work arrangement:
 - a. Explanation regarding how the faculty member will fully meet the obligations of each domain of responsibility assigned. The needs of students and colleagues for ready access to a faculty member in formal and informal settings are the primary considerations.
 - b. Expectations as to the availability of faculty members to students (e.g., office hours) and colleagues (e.g., committee and faculty meetings).
 - c. Identification, with specificity, of the equipment that UTEP will provide.
 - i. Equipment necessary to enable a faculty member (whose remote work has been approved) to fully perform their duties will be provided by the University.
 - ii. Remote faculty should use only UTEP-owned IT devices that have been reviewed by departmental IT support staff for compliance with IT policies and standards.
 - d. Plan for servicing, repair, and replacement of University-owned equipment.
 - e. Arrangements for the return of equipment upon the separation of a remote faculty member.

- f. Management of institutional data: To ensure the availability and security of institutional data, UTEP-approved storage solutions should be used as appropriate for the relevant data classification. When hard copy material cannot be kept on campus, those materials should be stored in a location that has acceptable access control measures, such as a locked cabinet or locked office. NOTE: A locked car is not considered a secured location.
 - g. UTEP will not reimburse or provide a subsidy for a remote faculty member's utilities, broadband service, or parking.
- 2. A remote work arrangement is an exception to UTEP's expectation that faculty will be regularly available on campus. Remote work is not a right of an academic appointment, and the University retains the authority to modify or terminate any remote work arrangement at any time.
- 3. Units that had faculty members working remote prior to August 2022 are responsible for fulfilling the requirements in this policy if they wish to continue remote working arrangements.
- 4. Periodic Review of Remote Work Arrangements
 - a. The Chair, Dean, and Provost will review Remote work arrangements each academic year.
 - b. Any modifications to a remote work arrangement must be documented.
 - c. The unit has the discretion to terminate the remote work assignment and reassign the faculty member to work on-campus.
 - d. A faculty member may request to return to on-campus work for the upcoming academic term; however, a unit may not immediately be able to provide a private office based on the unit's available on-campus space.