

## **(Virtual) Maine Academic Libraries Day 2020 - June 3rd, 2020**

### **Opening group session, breakout room discussion on remote work**

#### What has been working well for you and your team?

- Virtual meetings have been helpful
- More productivity from home
- Minimizing the amount of Zoom meetings required helps
- We have been seeing weekly meetings. Some people have more interaction, and others would like more than what they have
- Some teams have been doing teambuilding fun things as well- pictionary and a 30 minute coffee and learn
- Appreciate having work to focus on.
- Zooms & MS Teams/Slack have been useful
- Chance to engage in Professional Development has been unparalleled
- Staying in frequent contact
- Improved communication, staying in touch. No change for those who typically work independently.
- One library has a shared calendar for where people are to track who is in the building. My library has a "10 at 10" that keeps track of what people are doing. both of those are good for getting a sense of what other people are up to and focusing on.
- Collaborative projects
- Love the time I gain from eliminating the long work commute.

#### What struggles has your team been experiencing?

- How to come back safely? How to make modifications?
- What about public service jobs? Stressful to follow guidelines - added stress for workers, felt less anxious when returning more frequently to work, rather than going back at once.
- Uncertainty and adjustment have been struggles
- We have also been struggling with the lack of movement- some have built in some light exercise into the day, but it's not the same.
- Team work has been pretty good, but we miss our colleagues and casual chats.
- Some anxiety about what's coming in the fall, our institutions haven't decided on plans.
- Ambiguity is hard to manage.
- Trying to figure out how to work entirely digitally, when paper is sometimes better especially for financial processes.
- Everything feels surreal.
- Some of us find that we are more productive, some prefer the office because they feel more productive in the office, breaking up your day with small breaks, stepping away from work at the end of the day.
- life/work balance are a struggle
- Much less human interaction in a job where that is usually >50% of "the job".
- Tech issues, not having multiple monitors, no designated work space at home

- Working a full day is now much more about sitting in front of a screen for ~8 hours...a LOT less physical exercise
- Lacking direction; lack of access to Special Collections materials to scan; more granular reporting of time and projects; lack of communication about building access.
- Really missing the face-to-face reference interactions, especially the organic connections we make during our time at work
- trying to find that work/life balance - if I usually get up and grab coffee at work, can I still do that at home on work time?
- No details on reopening plan yet. People feel nervous. Accommodating health issues, now & when reopening. How will we handle group study, and cleaning spaces?
- Staying motivated.
- Loneliness.

#### Share some strategies for work/life balance

- Setting boundaries to protect work/life balance is helpful!
- Enjoying bird watching, gardening, and walking.
- TV, planting gardens, cooking more
- Work/life balance is mostly all about finding ways to get outside and blow off steam.
- taking moments for self-care; Awareness of the need for self-care.
- End of day ritual.
- Combat tendency to "overhelpfulness."

#### What part(s) of this experience do you want to take into the future?

- lacks of commuting has been a positive thing
- Several people found working from home really positive, or would if they didn't have to take care of kids.
- Continue keeping detailed notes for supervisors.
- Regular meetings with staff has been one of the biggest things for working well for us.
- Keep shared calendar that tracks who's where.
- For remote reference help, Zoom/Google Hangouts can be fantastic. For many interactions, MUCH better than text-based chat.

#### Other notes:

- Feel glad to be at home during challenging times in the country to take time to process what's happening.
- It was good to just connect with others outside of our work circle who are facing similar issues, trial, tribulations, and feelings.