



# CACUBO

CACUBO Webinar Series on:  
***Coming Back to Work***

July 13, 2021

We will begin shortly. Thanks for joining!



# CACUBO

- This is the 14<sup>th</sup> monthly webinar CACUBO has hosted during the pandemic
  - On various topics ranging from HEERF (four on this topic) to reopening strategies to DEI to COVID testing.
- Today, we will hear from panelists who will share thoughts on how various institutions are navigating the return to in-person work for their various departments.
- We will send out a survey afterwards to solicit thoughts and topics for future webinars.
- If you would be willing to present in a future webinar, please e-mail me at [mmickey@nl.edu](mailto:mmickey@nl.edu).

## **SAVE THE DATE:**

Our **CACUBO Annual Virtual Meeting** is scheduled for September 27-29.

We have a great agenda planned.

We are providing three days of CPE for \$199.

Information will be coming out over the next few weeks.



# Today's Presenters

## **Host**

- Marty Mickey, VP-Finance, National Louis University

## **Moderator**

- Adam Wolff, Gallagher

## **Panel**

- Bob Swanson, Bowling Green State University
- Julee Sherman, Central Methodist University
- Ray Lauber, Emporia State University

## Poll: Where is your institution now?

- A. Back in person 100% spring 2021 & 100% in person fall 2021
- B. Hybrid in spring 2021 & Hybrid fall 2021
- C. Hybrid in spring 2021 & 100% in person fall 2021
- D. other

## **I. What are your staffing plans (in person in the office vs. remote) by department (business office, IT, academic, etc.)?**

### Discussion Guide:

- Flexible workforce policies and practices will remain essential
- Sweet spot to maximize engagement
  - Highest levels of engagement – working remotely 3-4 days and in the office 1-2 days
  - Lowest levels of engagement – working remotely none of the time or all of the time
- Cultural impact & inclusivity
- Engagement
- Communications transparency
- COVID strategies and vaccine requirements
- Increasing competition for talent - assess compensation approaches and retention strategies
- Consider the holistic value of their total rewards

## **I. What are your staffing plans (in person in the office vs. remote) by department (business office, IT, academic, etc.)?**

### Central Methodist:

- We remain/continue in person for staff and have had very few staff working remotely during the past year.
- Several Faculty worked remotely, but they are to be back in person for fall 2021.
- Vaccinations promoted during the spring, incentives over summer and fall will continue for employees.

### Bowling Green:

- Because we are a residential campus, we feel strongly that we need to have as many employees as possible return to campus and engage with students, co-workers and the campus community.
- However, in light of COVID risks and the lessons we learned from over a year of operating mostly remote, we want to be able to use those lessons effectively for the benefit of the employees and to positively impact the costs of in-person employment.
- While our overall intent is to bring employees back, we are allowing departments and functional areas find the best fit for themselves to both have the on-campus presence to engage with the community as well as reduce the physical footprint and costs associated with it.
- Resulted in IT having a majority working off-site full-time. Student facing areas have either a large percentage in the office each day, but still allow 1-2 days off-site if appropriate.

# I. What are your staffing plans (in person in the office vs. remote) by department (business office, IT, academic, etc.)?

## National Louis:

- The coverage levels vary and are higher for departments that are primarily student facing. For instance, a department like IT will continue to be primarily remote, whereas student services is in 100%.
- Surveys were important for us to gauge where employees were in their willingness to come back to work as well as to find out how many employees were vaccinated
- We have had to mandate coverage levels for certain departments. We do not yet know what this will mean for employee turnover.
- Some departments like finance have broken themselves into pods. One person from AP, one from Payroll and one from General Accounting must be in every day

## Emporia State University:

- Leveraged a shared governance approach as we moved to remote work during the pandemic, and similar approach as we “re-awakened” campus.
  - Input and discussion from stakeholders across campus include shared governance of faculty, staff and students
  - Academic representation
  - Student Affairs
  - Operations
- Most of campus returned face to face in fall of '20, with the rest returning to campus at the beginning of current summer session
- Did provide ability to accommodate remote work prior to vaccines being available, as well as work adjustment for at risk cohabitants, but those programs ended in May '21
- Mask and social distancing policy follows CDC guidance that unvaccinated should mask, but responsibility is on individual
- No tracking of vaccination status, and no requirement to be vaccinated, but continue to offer testing and vaccines for employees and students - Vaccines STRONGLY encouraged (Common Good)
- Recently administered layoffs due to a variety of budget issues, including COVID
- Leaving positions open longer as student counts are soft (particularly in student affairs)

## **II. What are your teaching plans (fully remote, virtual, optional, etc.) for the fall and what transitions have you had to make to meet student's expectations?**

### Discussion Guide:

- Employee mental health, stress and collaboration
- Provide high-quality instruction to students
- Resetting policies
- Maintain our student population
- Positions that need to be on-site (100% or most days)
- Requiring the vaccine for faculty and staff? (students)
- Resources to address likely gaps in learning



## II. What are your teaching plans (fully remote, virtual, optional, etc.) for the fall and what transitions have you had to make to meet student's expectations?

### Central Methodist

- All regular campus classes in person this fall – students had choice last year as all classes were also presented on-line.
- All students given IPADS since 2018 so automated change easier transition for 20-21 year.
- Our on-line programs that were developed during the pandemic will continue.
- Residential campus students may choose to take on-line classes if degree allows.

### Bowling Green:

- While we intend to gravitate to a high percentage of in-person courses, we will still have more online than we did pre-pandemic.
- Parents and students have a desire for in-person instruction and as a residential campus, we believe it is part of building student communities and strengthening the bonds between students and between students and the University.
- There are voices that wish to keep more remote offerings and it makes sense in certain courses, but not near the what we had during the height of the pandemic.

### National Louis

- Our teaching plans vary by program. Our graduate programs will be more virtual than it was before. Further, some of undergraduate programs have now moved to 50% remote and 50% in person.
- Surveys have been important for us to get a feel for what type of learning students desired and how many students were vaccinated.

## **II. What are your teaching plans (fully remote, virtual, optional, etc.) for the fall and what transitions have you had to make to meet student's expectations?**

### Emporia State University

- Returned to face to face classes for classes traditionally taught face to face
- Provided opportunity for academic adjustments for students exposed to/with COVID, students at risk, and work from home options for employees at risk, employees exposed to/with COVID, or with family members at particular risk, but again those ended primarily at the end of spring '21 semester
- Currently expanding online offerings, but those are outside of COVID, students still preferring non-face to face may enroll online if classes are offered online
- Student feedback has overwhelmingly indicated majority of our students are looking for face to face courses
- Strong encouragement to be vaccinated, students and employees (Common Good)
- Commitment to students that face to face instruction for those classes historically face to face

### **III. What are your student engagement strategies for the fall and what transitions have you had to make to meet student's expectations?**

#### Discussion Guide:

- Adapting university decisions in response to consumer behavior
  - Impact of students taking “time off”
  - Students choosing institutions based upon:
    - Face to face vs remote learning/experiences
    - Vaccination requirements
    - Flexibility with academic adjustments
    - Managing positive tests
  - Understanding student expectations
  - Parents/sponsors expectations
- Flexing resources while student counts are soft/declining
- Contingency plans for pivoting
- Inclusivity for vulnerable populations

### **III. What are your student engagement strategies for the fall and what transitions have you had to make to meet student's expectations?**

#### Emporia State University

- Aggressive strategies to stay connected with students taking “time off”
- Blended opportunities for student organizations to meet in person or virtually, depending upon RSO members interest
- Return to face to face summer experiences for residence halls in prep for fall
- Student program directors have all returned to campus and are available for interactions
- Continued on-campus employment opportunities for students
- Admissions and Advisors are setting face to face appointments based upon students desire
- Students ineligible for vaccine may work with our disabilities office

## IV. What challenges have you seen with the transitions in work environment and how have you negated those challenges?

### Discussion Guide:

- According to the Inside Higher Ed 2021 Survey of College & University Presidents:
  - 90% agree (46% strongly) that they'd been able to “implement some positive, long-lasting institutional changes during the pandemic.”
- Flexible work arrangements help employees cope better with pandemic-altered lifestyles
  - 56% of employers offering flexible work arrangements
- Ensure workplace safety
- Offer support through an employee assistance program (EAP)
  - 89% of employers offering an EAP
- Manager education and training
- Interpersonal relearning as campus “reawakens”
  - Collegiality
  - Good citizenship
  - Respect (Others)/Professionalism (Self)
- Work/Life balance for remote workers

## IV. What challenges have you seen with the transitions in work environment and how have you negated those challenges?

### Central Methodist

- Mental health - our counselor has also focused on activities for our employees - still a struggle.
- Social interactions- employees not knowing others on campus. Less communications
- Less collegial, less unified, less connected...many points that higher ed prides itself on.
- Those not vaccinated are concerned with safety on campus
- Attracting new employees – starting to see decrease in available applicants
- AND WE STILL EXPECT OUR EMPLOYEES TO OFFER TOP IN PERSON CUSTOMER SERVICE TO OUR STUDENTS

### Bowling Green:

- There has been resistance to come back to work and it tends to differ between departments, position types and even between groups of areas. There have been some resignations and retirements as a result.
- Of course, individual risk must be assessed also as we are not beyond the pandemic yet. So we will make accommodations as needed.
- I have found that still allowing a flexible work week helps in the transition and to communicate and discuss early and often what the plans are. Address safety concerns.
- We also are retaining things like barriers and providing masks, sanitizers and other PPE to gradually return to some form of normalcy

## IV. What challenges have you seen with the transitions in work environment and how have you negated those challenges?

### National Louis

- Employees have gotten used to remote working and many contend that they get more done remotely. As such, there has been a resistance to come back to work.
- Some employees are still fearful of coming in due to the pandemic
- We have learned that good, constant communication is key to getting through this.

### Emporia State University

- Majority of employees interested to return to campus
- Communication, communication, communication on return to work, leverage shared governance to help communicate
- Regular virtual town halls to communicate, answer questions, provide information, particularly when re-awakening campus
- Challenges with employees cohabitating with individuals at risk or struggling to find child care
  - EAP referrals for assistance in finding additional supports/assistance
  - Consideration of flexible work schedules, other alternatives during time
- Board of Regents expectation for us to reduce footprint, so preparing for new remote/telecommute policy
- Interpersonal/collegiality issues
  - Space for relearning/readjusting
  - Lots of coaching
- Work with supervisors to create space for employees to acknowledge loss while returning back to campus (as easy as allowing them to voice that loss and have it acknowledged by the supervisor)

## **V. What are you are doing for employees in terms of benefits, pay, etc., because of the pandemic? What changes are you making?**

### Discussion Guide:

- Assess compensation approaches and retention strategies
- Consider the holistic value of their total rewards
- Nearly 4 in 10 employers experienced turnover of 15% or more in 2020.
- As job opportunities become more abundant, employers will intensify their focus on managing turnover
- Growing competition is increasing attention on compensation
- Most employers (61%) consider attracting and retaining a competitive workforce their top operational priority in 2021
- About two-thirds (64%) of employers have implemented telemedicine
- Ongoing testing/vaccinations
- Formalize remote work/flexible schedule protocols



## V. What are you are doing for employees in terms of benefits, pay, etc., because of the pandemic? What changes are you making?

### Central Methodist

- Incentives for employees and students to be vaccinated
- Considering more flexible hours

### Bowling Green:

- Most of our departments are accommodating a more flexible approach to being present in the office, akin to a flexible workweek.
- We have a formal telecommuting policy now to allow employees to request remote work accommodations.

### National Louis:

- Employees who show proof of a vaccination card do not need to take the daily pre-check on the portal. However, we haven't done really anything else from an employee benefit standpoint.
- On the student side, we have instituted a raffle each term and are awarding scholarships for a term of tuition to two students each term who have shown a proof of vaccination

### Emporia State University

- Free testing and vaccinations
- Developing central remote/telecommuting policy
- Relaxed requirements on health benefit incentive programs during pandemic
- Bumped up telemedicine coverage
- Exploring use of student health center to provide on-going minor med support to employees

## **VI. Share tips that have helped you manage your workforce. Can you provide any suggestions as it relates to post-pandemic operations?**

### Discussion Guide:

- Virtual permanence — the transition to virtual workplaces as part of a standard operational structure
- Increase in telemedicine adoption
- Pressure to endure long-term unpredictability and to manage not-so-new everyday stresses
- Increased burnout and decreased emotional wellbeing among employees
- Allowing flexibility in how and when work gets done, as well as where, is essential
- Evaluating the specific needs of employee/affinity groups
- Keeping a competitive workforce during an unparalleled rise in labor market mobility requires a firm strategy
- Intervene with EAP supports

## **VI. Share tips that have helped you manage your workforce. Can you provide any suggestions as it relates to post-pandemic operations?**

### Central Methodist

- Summer celebrations each week for employees to gather (game, snack, get to know others ) one hour a week.
- Reintroduce employees to each other.
- Avoid “Culture shock”
- Ramping up on-boarding for new employees

### Bowling Green:

- While we and many others with residential campuses strongly desire to bring back that full, vibrant and busy campus atmosphere, we run the risk of losing all the efficiencies we realized when we were forced to work remote such as:
  - Reduced need for physical foot print and related utilities, maintenance, upkeep, security, etc.
  - Time saved travelling between meetings, in particular for those with heavy schedules.
  - Risk having some very good deliverers of online instruction not continue to hone their skills and then leverage that into larger audiences.
- Our employees and students will have higher levels of mental stress and need access to support.

## **VI. Share tips that have helped you manage your workforce. Can you provide any suggestions as it relates to post-pandemic operations?**

### National Louis:

- Staff meetings have been more important than ever because it is sometimes harder to communicate what everyone is doing when they are not together in the same office.

### Emporia State:

- Leveraging partnerships with shared governance
  - Decision-making
  - Communication
  - Information gathering
  - Feedback
- Town Hall conversations (virtual)
- EAP interventions when necessary
- “Morale boosters” – Ice cream trucks, drawings for president’s box to watch fireworks (limited numbers for safety), etc.
- Delegate centrally developed communication to appropriate Vice President levels for disbursement versus campus wide email blasts
- Encourage supervisors to openly create space that acknowledges employees losses by returning to work on campus, while celebrating getting back together



# CACUBO

For more information, please visit...

- Gallagher Higher Education Think Tank Paper  
[What Does Better Look Like for Your Institution? Current Challenges and Tomorrow's Priorities for HR](#)
- [Gallagher 2021 Workforce Trends Report: People & Organizational Wellbeing Strategy](#)
- Gallagher Webinar – Staying Competitive with Inclusive Benefits: A Benchmarking Approach
  - July 14 | 1-2 PM CT
  - [Click here to register](#)

Question Report

#	Question	Asker Name	Asker Email
1	Will your slides be available to download? <i>Yes, on the CACUBO Website</i>	Karen Holland	hollandk@hiram.edu
2	Do any of institutions maintain "core days" or expectations for a minimum number of days on-site for (most) teleworkers? <i>Some of our panelist's institutions are requiring this. In others, it varies by department.</i>	Eric Davis	eric.davis@minnstate.edu
3	I'm also interested to know if you have adopted any policies or expectations about equipment in home offices AND/OR the work site. Similarly, expectations around assigned space for teleworkers at the work-site v. available "hoteling" space <i>Not providing home office set ups for employees in addition to work set ups. One or the other.</i> A panelist talked about allowing employees to work from home and being flexible because of an employee's children. I am not sure I am comfortable allowing employees to work from home due to family. I want work-from home to be relevant to th e position, not the employee. I do want to be flexible, in unique/one-off situations, but I prefer people take responsibility for thier children outside of work. I know everyone made it work at the start of covid, but this doesn't seem right to allow longer 4 term. Is this insensitive or reasonable? <i>This would be an institution by institution choice.</i>	Eric Davis	eric.davis@minnstate.edu
5	Are students, faculty, staff required to be vaccinated at any institution? <i>No, but each group are highly encouraged to get the vaccination.</i>	Anonymous Attendee	
6	How are you addressing those who cannot have the vaccine but can work 100% remotely? <i>We are trying to be flexible where we can and where we can still make sure the work gets done.</i>	Anne Wilcheck	wilcheck.4@osu.edu
7	Not sure how many of your schools have implemented a vaccine requirement, but if you have, have you seen good talent leaving because of it? <i>None of the institutions have,</i>	djbarnick041@stkate.edu	djbarnick041@stkate.edu
8	What is other institutions doing concerning childcare. We have been very flexible but look at making changes in the Fall. <i>No major changes to our current policy other than trying to be flexible where we could to make sure works gets done.</i>	Anonymous Attendee	
9	how are you hadling employees you know are NOT vaccinated?  <i>They must undergo regular testing, wear masks and continue to perform the daily pre-checks. Non-vaccinated individuals (employees, students, and/or visitors) are expected to adhere to CDC, state, and/or local health agency guidelines.</i>	Anonymous Attendee	
10	how do you handle ADA accommodations in hoteling stations? <i>We are trying to be flexible where we can. Each accommodation will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, engaging in the interactive process as required under the ADA. The Job Accommodation Network (<a href="https://askjan.org">https://askjan.org</a>) is a great resource for a starting point in brainstorming accommodation ideas.</i>	Anonymous Attendee	
11	for those in a hybrid or fully remote position, are you reimbursing for travel expense to come to campus for occassional meetings? <i>No</i>	Anonymous Attendee	



69	Anonymous	Anonymous	7/13/2021 13:05	1. Where is your institution now?	Back in person 100% Spring 2021 & 100% in person Fall 2021
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