

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF REMOTE WORK AT STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY

A Report by the Stony Brook University Senate Environment Committee

Revised 4/29/2021

Hear this: In the rush to return to normal, use this time to consider which parts of normal are worth rushing back to.

If things go back exactly as they were we will have missed the opportunity to take the good from this bad.

The gift nobody's asked for is sitting here for us all to open — an opportunity to do some housekeeping in where we focus, who we spend time with, what we consume, how we work, what matters and most importantly what doesn't.

Take notes. We're getting a lesson we cannot forget when things return to normal.

-Dave Hollis, March 25, 2020.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The University Environment Committee, a standing committee of the Stony Brook University Senate, conducted a project in the Spring of 2021 to estimate the potential environmental impacts of a long-term policy allowing some fraction of work to be done remotely after pandemic operating restrictions are ended. Specific areas of interest included parking, traffic, carbon footprint reduction, and green space preservation.

In March and April 2021, 531 faculty, staff, graduate student employees, and administrators responded to a seven question survey regarding on-site work location, commuting method, and commuting distance. The survey then asked that if it were an option, how many days per week could the respondent work remotely and still fully meet their professional and academic obligations.

Responses ranged from situations where all work must be conducted on-site, to respondents who would much prefer to return to work on-site, to respondents that reported being able to work 100% remotely at full or even enhanced effectiveness. An open comments field yielded many nuanced responses regarding both advantages and disadvantages of remote work.

Overall, faculty respondents indicated that 54% of their work could be done remotely, graduate student employee respondents 63%, and staff respondents 69%. A large majority of respondents (87%) travel to campus in single occupancy vehicles, with a mean one-way commuting distance of 17.5 miles and a mean one-way commuting time of 36 minutes.

The terms and conditions of employment at Stony Brook University are set by University and State policy. Some positions clearly require 100% on-site attendance while other positions may allow some work to be conducted remotely. Allowing the continuance of some remote work by some employees could serve important State and University purposes by:

- Averting a return to the parking and traffic crises that have plagued SBU in past years.
- Reducing the need to construct additional parking, the associated expense of \$3,000 - \$10,000 per space for constructing surface parking lots, and affording “breathing room” during the upcoming repair or replacement of the Administration Garage.
- In locations where additional parking is still required, lessening the level of crisis increases the ability to convert existing surface lots to multilevel structures, preserving irreplaceable green and open space.
- Helping the University meet carbon footprint reductions mandated by the New York State Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act of 2019.
- Providing additional time to implement attractive long term alternatives to accessing campus via single occupancy vehicles, instead of being forced by crisis into short-term reactive fixes.

Allowing appropriate levels of remote work can be an important tool to achieve these worthy goals without compromising the vibrancy of a fully occupied campus.

INTRODUCTION

Prior to March 2020, parking availability and traffic congestion at Stony Brook University had reached crisis levels. Weekday parking was difficult to find on West Campus and routinely unavailable on East Campus. A short-lived pilot program offered free valet parking in the hospital staff garage so that cars could be double parked to increase capacity, and new East Campus hires were being required to park in the SBU R&D park and take a shuttle bus two miles to East Campus.

Traffic congestion at the beginning and end of the workday was severe on the approach arteries of Route 25A, Sheep Pasture Road, Stony Brook Road, and Nicholls Road. Inclement weather could easily add 30 minutes or more to commute times.

In 2019, the University Environment Committee had already begun to discuss whether allowing some remote work might be one strategy to address the parking and traffic crises. Since March 2020 when pandemic operating restrictions were put in place, Stony Brook University employees have clearly demonstrated that remote work is possible. Against this backdrop, the Environment Committee decided that the time was appropriate to estimate the extent to which remote work could help to address some of the environmental issues facing Stony Brook University.

METHODOLOGY

A seven question survey created in Qualtrics appears in Appendix A. The survey was released on Wednesday, March 31, 2021 through the University Senate mailing list and the United University Professions payday newsletter. It was also included in the Campus Announcements email newsletter published April 5, 2021. Responses through Monday April 12, 2021 are included in this report.

Several questions were deliberately left as text entry rather than fixed choices to allow nuanced and complex responses. The last question prompted open comments by the respondents. Qualtrics options were set to prevent multiple responses from the same computer, and the Qualtrics bot detection security algorithm did not flag any responses as suspicious.

RESULTS

A total of 531 responses were received:

Question 1: What is your role?

Staff.....258 (48%)

Faculty.....169 (32%)

Graduate Students...99 (19%)

Administration..... 5 (1%)

Question 2: Where is your primary on-site work location?

West Campus.....360 (68%)

East Campus.....103 (19%)

South Campus.....32 (6%)

Southampton.....16 (3%)

Research & Development Park.....6 (1%)

Tech Park.....2 (<1%)

Other.....12 (2%)

Question 3: What is your mode of transportation to get to campus when you work on-site?

Car.....464 (87%)

Multiple.....44 (8%)

(Includes Car sometimes, Carpool, Walk, Bicycle, Bus, LIRR, Uber/Lyft, Amtrak, Run, Ferry)

LIRR.....17 (3%)

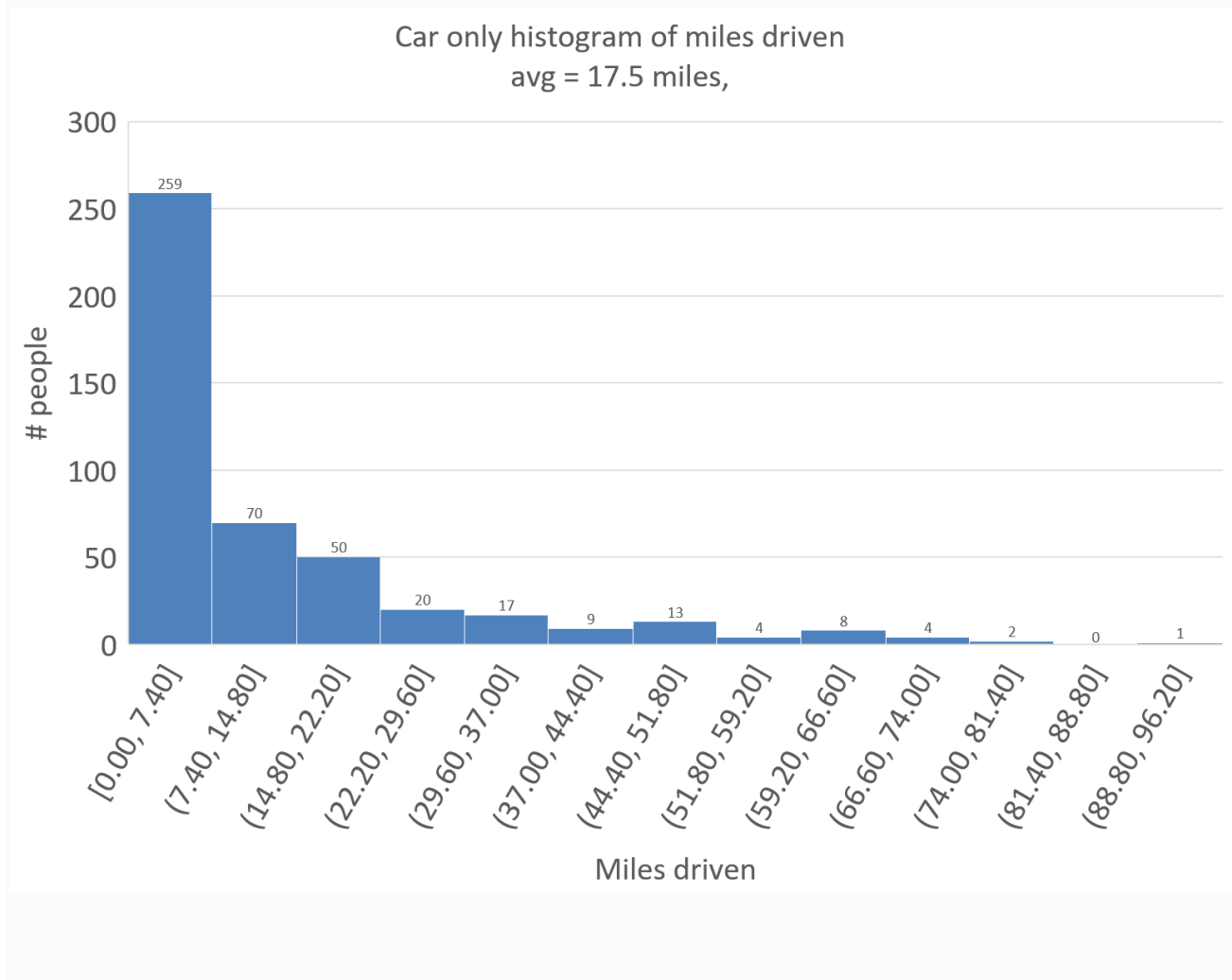
Walk.....4 (<1%)

Bicycle.....1 (<1%)

Never had to come to campus.....1 (<1%)

Question 4: What is your commute length in miles (one way)?

A histogram of commute distance in miles was constructed for those respondents who reported using a single occupancy vehicle to come to work. The median one-way commute distance for those respondents was 10 miles, with a mean distance of 17.5 miles.



Question 5: What is your commute duration in minutes (one way)?

If a respondent's answer was unclear or ambiguous it was excluded. If a respondent answered with a range of time the numerical value assigned was the mean, i.e. "30 to 40 minutes" was assigned a value of 35.

Duration of commute, one way:

15 minutes or less.....152 (36%)

16 to 30 minutes.....162 (38%)

Greater than 30 minutes...109 (26%)

The median one-way commute time was reported as 25 minutes, with mean time of 36 minutes. Twenty-five respondents reported as "long haulers" with one-way commute times of 120 minutes or more.

Question 6: If you had the option to perform some portion of your job remotely, how many days per week could you do so and fully meet your academic/professional obligations?

Each respondent answered with a number of days per week. If a respondent's answer was unclear or ambiguous it was assigned a numerical value of 0. If a respondent answered with a range of days the numerical value assigned was the mean, i.e. "1 or 2 days" was assigned a value of 1.5, "3 to 5 days" was assigned a numerical value of 4. A mean value for each group (faculty, graduate students, staff, administrators) was then calculated.

The various groups reported the following mean days per week that could be worked remotely:

Faculty.....2.7 days/week (54% remote work possible).

Graduate Students... 3.2 days/week (63% remote work possible).

Staff..... 3.4 days/week (69% remote work possible).

Administrators..... 1.8 days/week (32% remote work possible)

Note that only 5 administrators answered the survey so this number may be less accurate than the others.

Question 7: Comments. Enter your email if you wish to directly receive study results (your identity and responses will remain anonymous).

Numerous comments were received, a selection is included as Appendix B. Although not all were completely germane to the environmental focus of this study, many were nuanced and insightful into more general issues of remote work.

DISCUSSION

Significant numbers of faculty, staff, and graduate student employees responded to the survey, but only five administrators.

Most respondents work on either West Campus (68%) or East Campus (19%).

A large majority of respondents (87%) drive single occupancy vehicles to work on-site, with a mean one-way commute of 17.5 miles. The US Environmental Protection Agency estimates that the average automobile in the USA generates 411 grams of carbon dioxide per mile driven, so the average Stony Brook employee generates 14.38 kg of CO₂ per daily commute. Assuming 225 commuting days per year, this calculates to 3.24 metric tons annually for each single occupancy vehicle commuter.

The New York State Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act of 2019 mandates carbon footprint reductions for all State agencies including Stony Brook University. Statewide goals include an 85% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and a carbon footprint reduction of 22 million tons annually. A reduction in commuting miles by University employees might be creditable towards the University meeting these legislative goals.

Most respondents felt they were as productive if not more productive when working remotely as they would have been on-site. Other respondents felt that the office environment is less distracting, provides better tools for their work, and improves their work/life balance.

Some instructors advocated for a return to in-person teaching. Others pointed out that there is value in retaining some aspects of remote instruction, such as greater flexibility in meeting students whose schedules make it difficult to get to traditional office hours.

Very many respondents cited avoiding the time, expense, and stress of commuting and parking as one of the best things about working remotely.

Most respondents preferred a hybrid model where they worked remotely some days and on-site some days, with some scheduling flexibility to meet changing work requirements.

The terms and conditions of employment at Stony Brook University are set by University and State policy. Some positions require 100% on-site attendance while other positions may allow some work to be conducted remotely. Ideally, a long term remote work policy would involve a formal process, similar to that used during pandemic restrictions, worked out between:

- Faculty and Department Chairs / Deans,
- Graduate Student Employees and Graduate Advisors,
- Staff and Supervisors.

Allowing the continuance of some remote work by some employees could serve important State and University purposes by:

- Averting a return to the parking and traffic crises that have plagued SBU in past years.
- Reducing the need to construct additional parking, the associated expense of \$3,000 - \$10,000 per space for constructing surface parking lots, and affording “breathing room” during the upcoming repair or replacement of the Administration Garage.
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Allowing appropriate levels of remote work can be an important tool to achieve these worthy goals without compromising the vibrancy of a fully occupied campus.

CONCLUSIONS

While we all wish to return to a vibrant in-person University community, there is a difference between a bustling campus and a bursting one. Over the past year, we have learned how to work remotely, in many cases with as great if not greater effectiveness as working on-site. Allowing the continuance of some remote work by some employees could avert return to the parking and traffic crises that have plagued SBU in past years, lessen the need to construct additional parking, preserve irreplaceable open and green space on campus, give us time to seek longer-term transportation solutions, and help us meet New York’s ambitious climate preservation mandates.

CONTRIBUTORS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The survey questions were authored by Sarah Battaglia, Matthew Eisaman, Mona Ramonetti, Frederick Walter, and Thomas Wilson. Mark Lang assisted with implementing the Qualtrics survey. Sarah Battaglia, Carlos Colosqui, Matthew Eisaman, Mona Ramonetti, and Thomas Wilson performed the data analysis. This report was written by Thomas Wilson with editorial input from the University Senate Environment Committee.

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Special thanks to all the members and friends of the University Senate Environment Committee for their continuing dedication and service.

APPENDIX A. REMOTE WORK SURVEY

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF REMOTE WORK

A survey for faculty, staff, graduate student employees, and administrators at Stony Brook University.

Dear Colleagues,

The University Senate Environment Committee is conducting a study to estimate potential environmental impacts of a long-term policy allowing some fraction of work to be done remotely. Specific areas of study include parking, traffic, carbon footprint reduction, and green space preservation.

Please help UEC gather data by completing this anonymous survey by Monday April 12th.

Thank you for your time and for your service to our University.

What is your role?

- Faculty
- Staff
- Graduate Student
- Administrator (M/C)

Where is your primary on-site work location?

- West Campus
- East Campus
- South Campus
- Research and Development Park
- Tech Park
- Stony Brook Southampton
- Stony Brook Medicine Commack
- Stony Brook Medicine Southampton
- Other (please specify):

What is your mode of transportation to get to campus when you work on-site?

- Car
- Bicycle
- Walk
- LIRR
- Bus
- Carpool (please specify how many in car):
- Other/multiple (please describe):

What is your commute length in miles (one way)?

What is your commute duration in minutes (one way)?

If you had the option to perform some portion of your job remotely, how many days per week could you do so and fully meet your academic/professional obligations?

Comments. Enter your email if you wish to directly receive study results (your identity and responses will remain anonymous).

APPENDIX B. SELECTED SURVEY COMMENTS

We have proven that we are highly effective working remotely- we should be afforded this opportunity. We should have flexibility that other professionals have to come into the office to address student needs but work remotely as well.

I enjoy the option to work remotely. It helps me balance my personal and professional responsibilities much more easily. I also enjoy not spending so much time sitting in traffic for commutes.

I sometimes need to be in all the time to keep the lab running

I am a faculty strongly sympathetic to these concerns. But the degree to which my own colleagues, now, are using legitimate reasons like the ones implied in this survey to serve as an excuse to teach from home or conduct important meetings from home---for purely selfish reasons---is demoralizing. There are subtle cues irretrievably when we move from each other's company to the far inferior mode of zoom. It is time for us to act like adults and do our jobs, the jobs for which we are getting paid, and have been consistently getting paid during a pandemic when many other Americans lost theirs. I say this as a strong supporter of our faculty union and of worker's rights.

I think we can participate in committee meetings remotely, but I prefer to teach in person

I already work remotely sometimes, but if certain low-intensity meetings (one hour rap sessions of various kinds, or even faculty meetings where nothing major is at issue) could be done remotely, I could likely add an entire extra remote day to my schedule, which would save me time, and reduce environmental stress as well. I wouldn't want to ever be 100% remote, but being on campus 2 days a week is sufficient to do all the in-person things I need to do, and always has been. Thanks for your work on this.

I realize this is a SUNY and state employee matter but job flexibility has been proven prior to COVID throughout the world and various industries. Work/life balance makes for overall better productivity and the end result is getting the job done. Having some location flexibility could also make Stony Brook a sort after work place allowing for less turn over and attract better applicants for positions.

I prefer to work in the office but I sometimes get more work done at home because I don't have people constantly coming in my office. Mixing home and office work days makes me the most productive.

The flexibility of working from home has dramatically increased my productivity.

1) Meeting with students via Zoom at times that work better for their schedules outside of my 9-5 has been a great benefit. Furthermore, students are more available to meet on days that they do not come to campus. Meeting students via Zoom will work in some people's workspaces but not all. My office is in a main hallway which would be too disruptive for a teleconferencing call. Last night as I was grading, I kept my office hours open for 3 hours, and students popped in and out at convenient times for them. I would not be sitting so relaxed at work until those later hours. That way of working (grading and having office hours just open via Zoom) has been a wonderful addition to building my relationships with students.

2) All of my classes are writing-intensive, and grading papers has worked out so much better. I save a tremendous amount of time using Google Classroom (GC). I will continue to use GC when we return, but keeping the momentum of grading in the morning without stopping, driving to work, walking to HSC (I park on West Campus and walk over), getting settled, and then resuming work without the interruption (I always graded from home in the morning before work) has increased my ability to return work to the students more quickly.

3) Attending school-wide and university-wide meetings has been much easier, and again, less of an interruption. I have been able to participate in many more events than I would if I were walking over to other places on campus.

4) An unexpected bonus has been my ability to attend off-campus events and conferences that I would not otherwise attend. If I were traveling to a conference, there are many expenses and much time is needed. For local events, getting off campus is not easy. I attended a very informative conference on human trafficking in Suffolk County from home. I would never have left campus to go to this event. That would be too inconvenient and time consuming for something that is not directly related to my work (it is related but not directly enough that I would have gone into work and then went there). Again, some people could attend events such as these in their offices, but I could not. There is too much going on (it was a half or full day event). I am presenting at a conference next week through the University of Maryland. This is directly related to my work, so I would have tried to go in person. Furthermore, having the time at home to prep with my co-presenters has been very effective.

5) My home environment is very conducive to staying focused. Even before the lockdown, when I needed to push through grading or work on a big project, I always planned to complete that type of work on a Saturday at home so I had a quieter work setting. I enjoy the social aspect of being at work, but it is difficult to accomplish larger tasks.

6) Then there are, of course, the personal practical matters: no concerns about outfits, shoes, lunch.... Getting ready for work included much more preparation time to go TO work than it does now. I have a morning workout and then I am right to work! My mornings are task-oriented (work tasks) rather than prep-oriented: I would still be getting ready for work when I am already working.

I definitely want to be physically in the classroom for teaching. Committee meetings might end up often being remote even upon returning to campus. Typical for non-STEM faculty, I work at home on days I do not teach.

I have worked 1-2 days/week remotely for many years

I think there are many days that working for home makes more sense for me than traveling to work as I spend almost 4 hours a day in the car (often doing phone meetings) that could be more productive in my home office.

I believe we should have some flexibility in scheduling. As operational needs require us to be on campus we should be however if the work for the day could be done remotely there should be less of an emphasis on where it is completed from.

Definitely two days of my work can be done remotely and HIGHLY effectively, with less noise and heightened FOCUS.

What if we continue the way we did in the past; commuting 5 days a week? Do we really care about our planet? Are we a research university or not? Researching is vital; What action do we take with it? Imagine thousands and thousands of people with cars and commutes all over the country, working from home for even simply one day a week. That can make a difference for the health of the world. Trains, subways are not an option for so many due to lack of infrastructure, connections to their destinations (My train connections would take me three hours to get to the University). and I would only be able to leave around 4:00AM or 6:00 AM or 10:00 PM. Hmm? How can we lead a charge to make change? The earth needs us now.

The option to partially work remotely is welcome and could improve efficiency.

Not comfortable being on campus. The air flow is not adequate, the bathrooms were not adequate for the number of people in the building, and the cleaning has not been adequate even prior to COVID.

Thank you for putting this survey out - it is important for QOL.

I believe we have proven that we can do our jobs effectively in a remote manner. I can be on campus to teach and meet with students and then have some time reserved to work remote. There are some task that I feel I am more effective when able to work remote - I share an office and it can be a distracting environment at times.

I am also an undergraduate studies director - I am finding that it is actually EASIER to do my work and meet with students via Zoom than to try to meet in-office. I think coming into the office one day a week would be fine.

I often worked remotely for some days before the pandemic because it is a good way to be productive and isolate while writing.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide far more availability to students by offering online "office hours" through Zoom at times that are mutually preferred for me and students - most of them are "night owls" as am I, and online instruction is much more effective at times when they are most alert.

The world has become a very small place with high-speed internet, webcams and teleconferencing software.

I have been doing my entire grad program online and although it is nice to see people and meet people in my program, it is possible to do it all remotely if necessary.

TA duties being able to be conducted remotely for classes where the TA is not the instructor of record (large lecture classes) would be extremely helpful in eliminating unnecessary travel and the environmental impact it creates. In my current TA appointment (all online) if I were to commute, it would require 200 extra miles of commuting per week in addition to my normal graduate courses.

Personally I'm partial to a hybrid model: 1-2 days of in-person teaching + an asynchronous online component. I don't advocate for fully asynchronous since students deserve face-to-face experience. But some asynchronous is good, and I've found that hybrid learning works wonderfully. Plus, it would be helpful to the environment.

Work from home is nice. But as a graduate student sharing a house with multiple people, my bedroom also doubles as an office. This has disrupted work/life balance, especially sleep, as there is always a nearby reminder that I "should" be working, or that I can do something "real quick" when I should be winding down for the day. Even though work is more convenient, it has accelerated a sense of work burn-out.

A concern I have is related to student equity: as a grad student, work from home means a shift in financial burden to pay for equipment that can support continued research from home. This may mean an upgrade from a personal laptop to a full workspace, increased internet bandwidth costs, and miscellaneous expenses (office supplies/printer/etc). A worry I have about moving to permanent/part-time work from home is how graduate students will be compensated for these setup costs.

My in-person work depends on the provision of clinical services via telehealth vs face-to-face. My teaching and research duties are effectively fulfilled remotely. I encourage the allowance of remote work when possible going forward.

Remote work is one of the largest contributors to my life stresses. I am worried that if too many wish to work remotely, there will not be an option to work in person.

I'm not 100% sure how much I could do remotely. I have been remote since COVID started, but I was on fellowship, and now TAing an online course. My research is all computational, so I didn't have to be on campus regularly except for when there were student seminars.

I like the idea of doing some parts of a project remotely, and saving in-person parts for a certain set of days. Less commute, less stress, but more flexibility.

Working from home allowed me to really focus on what needs to be done without any interruptions. I was able to balance my home and work life beautifully and it gave me a real piece of mind and increased my morale. I saved money on gas, miles on my car and I was up earlier doing work and was available at all hours of the day to do what needed to be done. The flexibility was refreshing and I was much more productive. I would go into the office one day a week to check mail/faxes, water plants and scan/print if needed. Zoom conferencing allowed for multitasking whereas in person meetings do not. I think taking this away from the pandemic would be a bonus and a move in the direction to a new normal.

Assuming office coverage by at least one staff member Monday - Friday, working remotely one to two days a week would improve my quality of life by cutting my commuting days - as well as

cutting fuel costs. It would save SBU the costs of the electricity I use while in the office. And, having staff work remotely a percentage of the time could also free up needed parking.

Traffic and parking on campus are both terrible. I only live 12 miles away and coming up Nicholls Road can take up to 45 minutes. In snow it has taken an hour and a half! My job is not student-facing and can be done remotely.

I think the flexibility to work remotely as needed would greatly enhance the work environment. It could be a recruiting tool and helps balance work/life needs.

I could do my entire job remotely, but I also think meeting in person for some things is important for connections. I would ideally like to work about 2 days a week remotely.

It's easier for me to get more work done at home.

Over the past year, my team has proven that we can work effectively -- and more efficiently -- in remote locations. In many instances, I have been able to get more work done remotely, as I can work longer hours and I have fewer distractions. I haven't encountered any obstacles whatsoever.

I am not a fan of working from home. I am much more efficient when working in a true office setting. I am physically more comfortable as well as mentally geared toward work. When home, I am easily distracted and I find I like and want to keep my work environment for work and my home environment for home and family. My choice would never be to work from home.

Even though I can perform my whole job at home, it would be nice to go into the office every once in a while.

My work has busier times so I am sure that some weeks I would be in 5 days, others less. I live on a busy street so I noticed when traffic was less and the noise pollution alone (or lack there of) was significant.

I look forward to returning to campus full time but the option to work remotely day to day when necessary would be helpful to those of us with school age children or underlying medical conditions. Being able to opt to work from home if I am feeling under the weather but still able

to perform my duties or if my child needs to stay home from school would allow me to do my job effectively.

I have been working fully remote for 1 year and I have been able to fully meet my professional obligations. So, it has been proven to be possible.

I work in the Stony Brook Union building, very concerned about what parking will be like when we have a full campus.

I have found that I am both very productive and happier working remotely. The stress of having to deal with traffic and getting to the university on time had effected my productivity as well as my job satisfaction.

Finance jobs with no student interaction can be done remotely full time with technological platforms such as zoom etc

Aside from the environmental impacts, I really feel having the ability to work remotely helps with work/life balance in general. We've proven over the last year that we can work remotely and still be productive. We are all given phones and laptops and can be reached at all times during the day. It just makes more sense for the busy lives that we all lead.

I think there needs to be some level of in person work to keep group cohesion and a sense of belonging. I would much rather have the flexibility to work from home instead of calling in sick - especially if it is a minor problem. We should switch from sick and vacation days and move to a paid time off model.

Would very much appreciate the opportunity to work from home at least partially, find I'm more productive and efficient

I can do the vast majority of my job remotely. The only things I need to be in the office for would be to help cover the front counter shifts but that is a rare occasion.

All of my work could be done remotely with the exception of mailings that need to go out from time to time. That could all be done on the one day a week in the office.

I would really love to work part time from home, it would be so beneficial in so many ways.

I especially support the option to work from home during days when the campus is unable to clear the snow and ice before we arrive at 7:30 am. It seems if all are not able to get their jobs done in time, we should not be put at risk getting in. I, and my colleagues, have fallen on our way to or from our offices.

While I can fully work remotely, I think it is extremely important to have a physical campus presence for all staff to support our students/faculty. Also, the in person element is lost when holding meetings via Zoom.

I prefer working from home. Having an in-home office is much more conducive for me to be able to quietly concentrate. I don't have the distractions of hearing other colleagues' phone conversations when I'm in the office.

As a full time working Mom who will have my kids home this summer with limited camp options (due to COVID) I would REALLY appreciate being able to work from home at least 3 days a week.

Our area can work 100% if we were allowed to. Right now we are coming in 5 days every 3rd week.

The pandemic has shown that much work can be completed remotely, but that in-person interaction with students, faculty and staff remain a core constant in promoting program and university community.

Commute during normal times can be anywhere from 25 minutes to 40 minutes. At the present time with fewer people on campus it takes less than 20.

Working remotely would be an enormous time saver, productivity level is much higher when working from home, the impact on local traffic, air pollution, no need for more parking garages, better service to faculty and students. The past year proved this is very workable.

I would welcome the opportunity to work from home instead of coming to the office 5 days a week. I accomplish more work at home since there are less distractions and interruptions. I have met more deadlines working from home because of this.

This survey is a great idea, and I'm excited to see the union tackling this. It would be great if eligible employees (which should also include essential workers because many essential workers have desk-bound jobs, even some of those in facilities) could have a certain allotment of remote-work days that they could use with supervisor approval. For example, if I need a service call at my house, wouldn't it be better for SBU to still get a day of productivity out of me instead of me burning through a vacation day? Thanks again for tackling this.

Working from home is not what it is cracked up to be. While my commute can be horrible at times, the constant distractions at home are not conducive to full time remote work.

As the manager of my department's finances, I primarily need to log in to university and State financial systems, thus, so long as I have a (stable) internet connection, I can work from anywhere, every day.

Another part of my job involves meeting with my department senior staff and staff in other departments/offices around campus (mostly regarding financial issues), which I can do remotely via zoom meetings... so long as, again, I have a solid internet connection. And lastly, I do need to make sure I can print and scan documents as part of my normal operations carrying out my duties, thus, so long as I have a good multifunction printer (which I do), and a good internet connection, I can work remotely.

It would save me stress of the commute (we all know what the LIE & Nicolls Road can be like in the mornings, with it being particularly dreadful during the start of every school year); of course there's the ""wear and tear"" on my vehicle, as well as the environmental impact of driving my car (yes, I have tried ride-shares and other commuting options, but they just don't pan out); but also, there's the time away from my home and family: at 45 minutes each direction (on an average, uneventful day), that's 1.5 hours each day spent driving, totaling 7.5 hours - a full work day's worth - spent driving, every week! That 7.5 hours could be better put to use working remotely - I can (and do) start my work day earlier and end later while working remotely, while still having a little extra time to spend at home and with family, thus everyone wins: the university gets more work out of me than the 37.5 hour work week, I get more time to spend on taking care of my family and home, I'm much less stressed, many aspects relating to the environment are improved with my reduced driving; in sum, I think driving to SBU to perform work that can be done 100% remotely would be doing a disservice: the "space" I would take up could - and should - be given to another employee who needs to be there more so than I; there is no benefit to the environment by having me drive to a place to get work done that can be done remotely; and it adds undue mental stress and pressure due to the feelings of not having enough time, which can actually negatively impact the work output of an employee.

I am happy to report that my supervisor and senior supervisors have been pleased with my job working remotely over this past year, in fact, they've even commented that they feel I've been able to get more done (both in breadth of work and depth of research) from home, since I don't have the everyday distractions of people popping into the office while I'm trying to focus on my complex financial issues. Over the past year, they have consistently stated that I am getting 100% of my duties done and they feel that my working remotely from home has not impeded my ability, in even a small way, to carry out and complete my duties. And in thinking back

critically of myself, I can report that I agree with my supervisors: there is nothing that I was unable to complete (or experienced difficulty completing) because I was not on campus.

I understand that others around campus may not be in such a position, but I'm sure there are many that have schedules that would allow for working remotely for some portion of the typical work week, and it would reduce the congestion and free up space for those that truly need to be there (in effect, prioritizing the limited space to those that truly need to be on-campus to conduct their work).

I think that it would benefit both the staff and the University to allow staff to work remotely on a consistent and continual basis. We have proved that we are able to serve the Campus requirements while not being on Campus over the past year, and we would be well prepared to switch back to remote work for any future emergency.

I have proven over the past year that 100% of my job can be completed from home, with no decline in performance. In fact, I believe my performance and productivity has improved in this year, and there are tangible measurables that support this.

I work in research. Experiments sometimes take several days and do not require me to be on campus 5 days a week.

A hybrid model would be a great option for Stony Brook where employees can work from home and come in and work in the office as needed or work 3 from home and 2 days in person or any combination thereof. I see great financial benefits to the university as this will cut down on electric/heating and ease the parking situation on campus. These are just a few examples of many.

I need handicap parking and I need to get to campus at least an hour before my shift to make sure I get a handicap parking space closer to my building since I cannot do long walks. I sit in the car and wait an hour each day before heading to my office. Working remotely has been beneficial to me in more than my professional obligations.

For the last 12 months, I have been working from home. During this time I have been most productive. As an office manager and admissions coordinator, a majority of my work is done on the computer, and I feel I have no need whatsoever to be face-to-face with the public (especially as Covid continues and shows no signs of relenting). Has SBU considered that I use my computer and my printer at home, saving the university electricity and paper? I have not used a copy machine, I have adapted to a paperless office to maintain records, and have used my own office space to maintain records--why waste money on my office at SBU?

I have avoided all the political aspects of the workspace and frankly, it is more peaceful; for me to work at home getting my job done (at all hours of the day and night). Duo has given me a secure computer environment, and zoom has served its purpose for admissions interviews, graduation recognition ceremonies, student orientation, and faculty meetings.

If SBU wants accountability, well my program would not have had a class for admissions, nor graduated its students if I was not doing my job.

I also don't miss the parking lot fiasco of the HSC. With limited parking, a crumbling parking lot (which coincidentally will be refurbished the moment we all go back to work--go figure that), I don't miss the disaster of that lot to get to work and paying for going there. My car has been dented twice in a hit and run in that lot. Do I miss commuting on the Indy 500 on Nichols Road daily with all of its accidents, speeding unsafe and rule-breaking drivers who are late every day, NO WAY.

This is the time for SBU to consider the cost-saving and environmental aspects of thousands of drivers back on the road. The pollution, gasoline usage of all these drivers is a worthy consideration.

It is time, we did it and proved work can get done. I saved SBU money even on the purchase of supplies to get my job done. I would say the benefits far outway any of the problems.

I have been able to work even more by being remote. When commuting, my day would become shortened by sitting in traffic for almost 2 hours some days on Nicolls road on my way to work. Being home, I can work right away! It's been so much better without the commute. Also, I haven't taken any sick days. Yup have been way less sick working remotely

While working from home was a nice change of pace last year, ultimately I would not want to do any days per week. I found it more disruptive to come to the office M-W-F and work from home T/Th. Or vice versa. My network isn't as fast at home and I found I forgot things in the office that made it annoying and frustrating to be at home at times. Also, my technology set-up at work is much more sophisticated, since I have 3 computer screens. I also VERY MUCH like the separation of my job and home life. I never think about work or rarely even do work when I'm at home, so unless I had a designated space in my house for my job office, I doubt I would be very happy working from home. I only foresee working from home when it's absolutely necessary - say when my child or husband is sick or I'm waiting on a service person to do work at the house.

In my role I work directly with faculty. If faculty want to meet on campus, I would need to be available to them, but if they wanted to meet virtually, I could do so as well.

I find that I am often more productive at home since there are less interruptions