OPERATIONS DIVISION

Western University OF HEALTH SCIENCES

E-NEWSLETTER

COO   **EHS**   **Facilities**   **HR**   **IT**   **Security**   **PMO**

## OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Message from the COO

An organization's core IT infrastructure consists fundamentally of the network (wiring, routers, switches, wireless access points, firewalls, internet connectivity, etc.), telecommunications (telephones, conferencing, video communications, etc.), and data (servers, storage, backup systems, etc). In some organizations, like WesternU, these three parts of the IT infrastructure are provided using disparate platforms and vendors. WesternU has historically had a network backbone based on Extreme products, an Avaya communications platform, and Dell servers and storage. These stand-alone systems require staff with specialized skills to support them and multiple maintenance contracts with each of the vendors. Other organizations make use of an integrated single-vendor IT platform for all three aspects of IT infrastructure operating as a Unified Computing System (UCS). For the past 10 months, IT has been working on a major initiative to migrate from our three disparate IT platforms to a Cisco UCS platform. This unified system requires less staff support and consolidates vendor maintenance contracts for economies of scale and greater negotiating power.
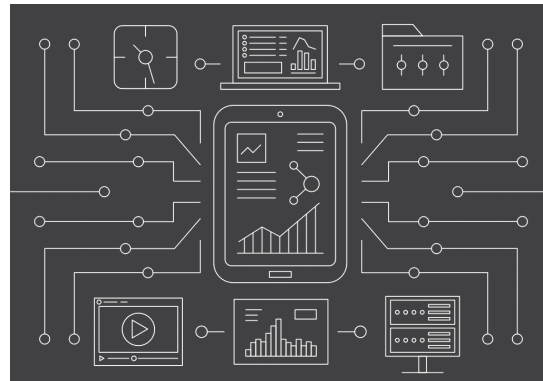
The decision to move forward with this migration was made late last year after an analysis showed opportunities for significant cost reductions in the annual IT operational spend. The project includes not only migrating the technology platforms, but relocating them to a new Data Center recently built in the HEC building. The current Data Center in the basement of the LRC building does not have a backup generator and experiences regular water intrusion. The new Data Center is about 60% smaller than the current one, has redundant UPSs, is on the HEC building generator, and has in-line rack cooling instead of whole room cooling to greatly reduce utility costs. As part of the migration to the Cisco UCS, we will eliminate 150-200 physical servers by shifting most applications to virtual servers running on four physical servers. This greatly reduces ongoing systems replacement and utility costs. The entire initiative has been funded by existing IT budget allocations that would have been used to upgrade/maintain the existing platforms and savings from renegotiated or eliminated contracts no longer. Other improvements realized during this migration include a move to fully online electronic backups as opposed to the current process of sending physical tapes for off-site storage, and a ten-fold increase in internet bandwidth (from 1 GBPS to 10 GBPS).

I share all of this with you because a migration of this magnitude does not happen without pain points and impact to our user community. We have been able to accomplish much of the work behind the scenes and did our best to make changes during normal *Patch Fridays*, but there have been times

where changes have had an unexpected negative impact that had to be corrected. We hope you have not experienced too many of these. We anticipate the migrations of our network and data platforms will be completed by the end of this calendar year and the migration of the communications (telephone) system will take place in the first half of 2021. We apologize for any inconvenience experienced as a result of this major forklift migration. Please know this pain will be temporary, whereas the substantial annual savings and the greatly improved services and infrastructure will continue into the future.

Clive Houston-Brown, Ed.D.
Senior Vice President & Chief Operating Officer

Environmental Health & Safety

University Policy Office

There are a number of departments that have policies that are due to expire or have already done so. Email reminders are going out to the policy owners. Please review your operating unit's policies to ensure they are current. Should you have any questions about your area's policies, please contact Shante Woods at swoods@westernu.edu

Environmental Health & Safety

Our Safety Data Sheet (SDS) database company is under new ownership. For those who need to look up a SDS on a particular chemical will now find it under a WesternU Icon with the word "Sphera" beneath it. If you have questions about this change or are unable to locate a chemical you are looking for, please contact ehs@westernu.edu for assistance.

Employee Health

Due to current COVID-19 situation, public health authorities across all levels of government, including our own Employee Health Office, are encouraging everyone to obtain this year's influenza vaccination. They are available at the PCC Pharmacy, as well as other pharmacy's in your local community and do not require a healthcare provider office visit. Protect yourselves and those around you.

Employee Compliance Training

In addition to the other mandated trainings, please ensure that any new hire in your operating unit has completed the COVID-19 training.

FACILITIES

The Bookstore gets a new look
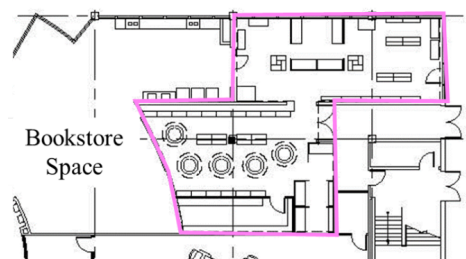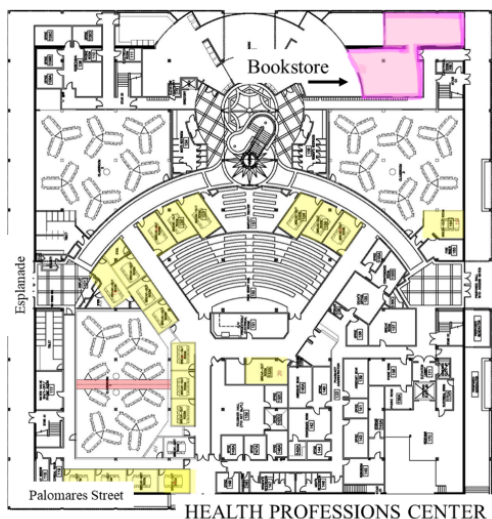
The Bookstore is in the process of moving to the first floor of HPC. Their new home will be located on the South side of the Student Commons; better accessible to students. The bookstore relocation will give the University an opportunity to consider options for re-use of their current space.

Bathrooms in the world of COVID-19

Concerns around restrooms cleanliness have increased in the world of COVID-19. Facilities has

Strategies Implemented to Keep our Bathrooms Safe

implemented multiple strategies to improve the restroom experience at WesternU. Its increased its cleaning, increased signage and to ensure proper spacing, every other stall has been taped off. As custodial staff continue to perform their daily

restroom inspections, they are noticing the yellow tape missing from stalls and sinks. We would like to ask for your cooperation, please continue to remind staff and students how important it is to maintain certain stalls and sinks closed off for their own safety and protection.
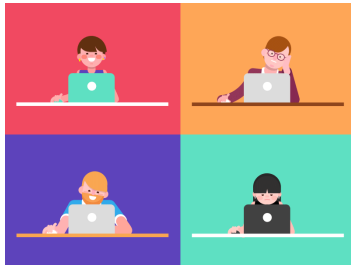
Human Resources

New Employees

We are pleased to announce that our new *Director of Employee Relations & Title IX Coordinator* will join the university the week of September 8th. We will provide more information in a welcome letter when she arrives.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Technical Strategy for Telecommuting and Hybrid Working

In support of the remote work environment and to prepare for the future, the IT Department is committed to ensuring all employees whose job functions can be done remotely, are equipped with the appropriate technology to be successful. The Technical Strategy for Telecommuting and Hybrid Working will include procuring inventories of laptops, portable desktops, monitors, headsets, webcams, and other accessories. Criteria for device eligibility per employee role will be developed, as well as robust inventory and tracking policies and procedures. The goal is to have a nimble response response to WesternU remote work needs so that WesternU Faculty and staff can continue providing teaching and support services to our students.

Zoom

IT has purchased additional large-group Zoom licenses that now allows us to host five meetings that can accommodate up to 1,000 meeting participants. The updated Zoom license also includes extra cloud storage for recorded meetings. Please note that a Zoom recording retention policy is under development. In addition, did you know that WesternU holds one Zoom Webinar license that can accommodate up to 3000 attendees? Please contact Technical Support for more information.

CAMPUS SECURITY

Employees on Campus During COVID-19

If you need to visit campus, **you must fill out the form** via the link below to alert WesternU Security that you will be on campus. Please complete and submit it prior to your arrival. While on campus, please adhere to the social distance minimum of 6 feet between yourself and others. Please do not linger longer than necessary on campus. A reminder that **all employees must have their WesternU ID badge** with them to access buildings. Please do not tailgate others entering the building as it is important to track who is in or has been in buildings during this time. If you have lost your ID badge or it is not working, please contact facilities at ext. 5258.
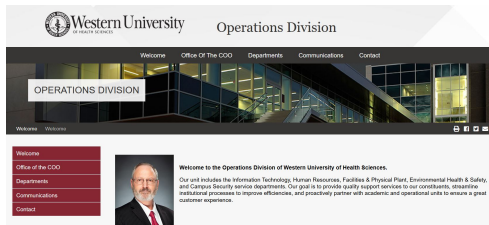
Link: https://westernu.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bsCkh31QSQajbUx

PROJECT MANAGEMENT OFFICE

The new PMO team is currently building out an Operations Division Project Portfolio page to provide the WesternU community visibility into projects underway. We look forward to unveiling the site sometime next month.

Operations Division

Welcome to the Operations Division of Western University of Health Sciences.

Our unit includes the Information Technology, Human Resources, Facilities & Physical Plant, Environmental Health & Safety, and Campus Security service departments. Our goal is to provide quality support services to our constituents, streamline institutional processes to improve efficiencies, and proactively partner with academic and operational units to ensure a great customer experience.

Visit Operations Division Webpage Here »»

✔ Monthly Unit Updates

✔ COO News & Announcements

✔ Campus Projects

Burnout from WFH (Work From Home)

69%
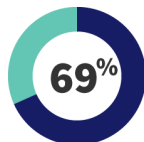
Over two-thirds (69%) of employees are experiencing burnout symptoms while working from home

48:05
HRS   MINS

The average workday is 48.5 minutes longer than it was before the pandemic

12.9 %

Meetings have gone up by 12.9 percent

1.4

An average of 1.4 more emails are sent per day

As the pandemic continues, juggling isolation, remote work, childcare and home schooling (for some) has resulted in a significant increase of employees feeling burned out. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), there are three characteristics in the definition of burnout: 1) Feeling of energy exhaustion or depletion 2) Increased mental distance from the job, or feeling negative or cynical about the job & 3) Reduced performance. A survey done by Monster.com found that about 2/3 of employees are experiencing symptoms of burnout. And according to a study of 3.1 million workers around the world, workdays are also longer.

It doesn't seem like things are changing any time soon so remember to try to get more sleep & exercise to help minimize the chances of burnout. Below are other fun ideas to help you cope.

https://www.today.com/health/covid-fatigue-pandemic-workday-48-minutes-longer-more-meetings-here-t189298
https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-08-03/the-pandemic-workday-is-48-minutes-longer-and-has-more-meetings
https://www.who.int/mental_health/evidence/burn-out/en/

Do Something Joyful that Marks the End of the Day

Something easy that doesn't require too much effort is to perform a ritual at the end of the workday. It a way to "clock out", signaling your brain that your working hours are completed and you can shift to your personal life. It's similar to our morning or bedtime rituals such as brushing our teeth; however, the strategy is to find something to do that brings you joy. Either taking yourself for a walk, ringing a bell, getting a sweet treat, or rolling on the grass 🐾, find something fun to mark the end of each workday.

https://www.today.com/health/covid-fatigue-pandemic-workday-48-minutes-longer-more-meetings-here-t189298

Work Outside Whenever Possible

Now with some time on your hands and limited outside activities, one fun project could be creating a space for you to work outside (if it's available). Direct sunlight promotes the production of Vitamin D and there is evidence that Vitamin D can help boost your mood and reduce stress hormones. Summer time can be hot but try to start your first hour or so outside and feel it create a better mood for your workday.

https://www.today.com/health/covid-fatigue-pandemic-workday-48-minutes-longer-more-meetings-here-t189298

Join a TikTok Dance Challenge
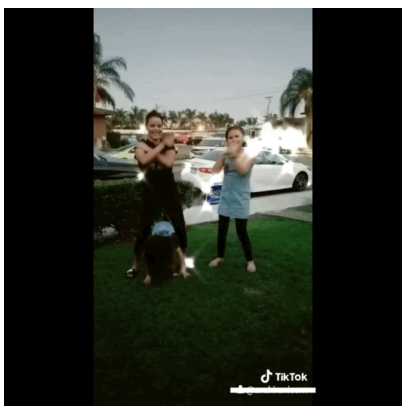
Social media usage during the pandemic has risen. Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat and especially TikTok have seen huge increases in engagement. TikTok set a new record and surpassed 2 billion downloads in April; an app that was particularly popular among Gen Z is now being used by both kids & adults. TikTok encourages content creation, lip-syncing, collaboration and dance challenges. In a time where feeling connected with love ones and friends is so important, TikTok & other apps offer a great way to reach out during the pandemic. If you're feeling bored, try joining a dance challenge with your little ones 🕺 or look for inspirational content that makes you happy during this difficult time.

https://www.business.com/articles/social-media-patterns-during-the-pandemic/
https://www.standard.co.uk/tech/tiktok-positive-impact-mental-health-wellbeing-experts-a4438246.html

Adopt or Foster a Furry Friend

Dog sales and adoptions have surged during the pandemic. If you've considered getting a pet companion now that you're working from home it's not only a realistic option but a healthy one. Adopting or fostering a furry friend during this time of isolation can help you manage loneliness and depression for you and your family. **Health benefits of owning a pet:**
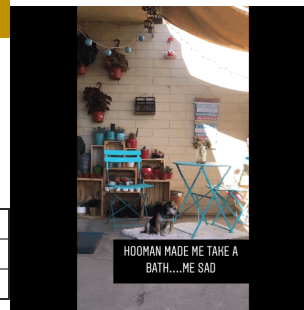

*Offering companionship	*Instilling a routine
*Providing a purpose	*Reducing blood pressure
*Offering opportunities for more exercise	*Offering mental stimulation

If this is not an option, there is always social media 😊; you can distract yourself looking through countless of animal pet videos just like these ☞

https://health.usnews.com/wellness/articles/adopting-a-new-pet-during-the-pandemic
https://www.miamiherald.com/news/coronavirus/article242139116.html

Buy a House Plant or More

Another alternate to getting a pet is a plant, plants make great quarantine buddies. Since the pandemic started, people are stocking up on plants. Adding green in what is now your office (home) has shown to improve mood and even just looking at a plant can make you feel better. There's no need for a green thumb, just give a plant some light, pay attention to watering and see it grow. If you're feeling stressed and up for the challenge, you can start easy and just buy one or two. It's a great kid-friendly family activity and allows you to completely unplug. And if you really get addicted maybe even create your own indoor jungle🌿🌱 or garden.

https://sustainability.ucsf.edu/3.874
https://www.standard.co.uk/tech/tiktok-positive-impact-mental-health-wellbeing-experts-a4438246.html

Newsletter Resources:
Video created using Animoto
Clipart from Vecteezy.com
Photo Credit: Pulguitas (means little flea; he was really tiny as baby)
Photo Credit: Delia Aguilar (Facilities cleaning staff)
Apps Used: TikTok, Instasize , Instagram, Pic Collage & GIF Maker

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Project Management Office
Office of the Chief Operating Officer