

## ***Open Office Guidelines*** **UC Merced Downtown Campus Center**

To enable staff to be as effective and productive as possible in the new DCC environment and to ensure that all are comfortable at work, it is important to consider how our personal actions may affect our colleagues. These are some guidelines that have been developed through trial and error at other organizations that have gone through similar transitions. Please note that these are guidelines and may need to be amended as we move into the space. Above all, these guidelines should reinforce a culture of communication, respect, and teamwork.

### **Minimize noise and distraction**

1. **For phone calls, develop a softer telephone voice or take your call in a private space.**

**Action:** Use a huddle, focus, or conference room or take a walk if the conversation needs to be loud. It is especially important to consider the volume of conversations when discussing confidential matters.

2. **For conference calls, avoid using a speakerphone or move calls to a private space.**

**Action:** Consider using a ZOOM call-in number and having individuals join from their desk, or use a huddle or focus room.

3. **Set cell phones to minimum ring volume, or better still, vibrate mode.**

**Action:** Start using your cell phone on vibrate to get used to this change before your move to the DCC.

4. **Use headphones to listen to music/audio.**

**Action:** Use regular or noise cancelling headphones to listen to music or other audio, and ensure a reasonable volume so that others around you are not disturbed.

5. **Avoid disturbing others nearby by using instant messaging software (such as Skype for Business or ZOOM) to communicate with colleagues rather than shouting to the other side of the room.**

**Action:** Ensure that IT has installed instant messaging software on your machine prior to the move. If we have 100% use of the system, it will encourage more people to feel comfortable using it.

**Action:** If you wish to not be disturbed, update your Skype for Business or Zoom status or place a sign on your workstation to indicate that you are busy.

6. **As much as possible travel through and work within neighborhoods without disrupting others.**

**Action:** Look for visual cues that someone might not want to be disturbed (headphones, head down, intense concentration). Ask if this is a good time to talk before you begin conversing with them – if not schedule another time that might work better.

**Action:** Say hello at the start of the day. While polite at home or on the street, multiple acknowledgements during the day can be disruptive.

**Action:** As much as possible, avoid disruptive movements and sounds like fidgeting and tapping. Eat foods that create excessive noise (e.g., carrots, chips, popcorn, etc.) in breakrooms rather than at your desk.

**7. Minimize offending smells from food and personal hygiene products.**

**Action:** Individuals have different thresholds for smell, and this can be difficult to communicate to others. Out of consideration to others, use the breakroom café eating areas on each floor to eat your food.

**Action:** Avoid strongly scented personal hygiene products like perfumes, colognes, and lotions.

**8. Minimize distraction and the possibility of getting co-workers sick by staying home when you feel ill.**

**Action:** Illness can spread quickly in spaces shared by a large number of people, and symptoms like coughing and sneezing can be very distracting to co-workers. If you feel ill, let your supervisor know that you plan to work from home if you feel well enough, or use a sick day.

**Be considerate about using and maintaining your desk and common spaces**

**9. Minimize clutter and mess on desks, and consider keeping personal items to a minimum.**

**Action:** Keep a tidy work space to help keep the overall office clean and organized. Where possible, minimize stacks of papers and other materials that can clutter your workstation.

**Action:** While most of us would like a personal photo or two at our desks, minimize other types of personal items and remember that many people are allergic to various types of flowers, perfumes, and plants. Also, be thoughtful about the appropriateness of your photos, desktop background, and/or screen saver.

**Action:** Small appliances (i.e. microwaves, coffee makers, refrigerators and toaster ovens) should be used in the shared breakrooms. Small appliances for personal or department use are not allowed due to the increase risk of fire and personal injury. Approval and use of small portable space heaters are restricted to temporary situations as per UC Merced Policy 653.04.

**10. Use the furniture provided with your workstation and do not take items from other spaces.**

**Action:** Employees are provided with the furniture and materials needed to perform their work. Please do not take furniture (e.g., tables, chairs) or other materials (e.g., trash cans) from other spaces. If you need additional furniture or materials, speak to your supervisor.

**11. Be cognizant at all times that we are sharing common spaces and equipment such as kitchens, refrigerators, dishwashers, microwaves, printers, and printer rooms.**

**Action:** Do not leave a mess on kitchen or café sinks and tables, out of date or unlabeled food in the refrigerators, spilled food in the microwaves, dirty dishes in the sink, documents in the printer, or trash in common areas. The message when common areas are abused is that some colleagues “should” clean up after other colleagues. . . this is not a respectful message. Please clean up after yourself and do so promptly.

**Action:** Be courteous and avoid putting articles in the refrigerator or on the counters that take up a lot of space (e.g., grocery bags, coolers). Label your food in the refrigerator (preferably with your name and the date) and dispose of food you brought in that you don't plan to eat.

**Action:** Please abide by the breakroom guidelines.

**12. Do not abuse the provision of common office and kitchen supplies, which are provided for the convenience of the occupants of the DCC and to encourage sustainable practices.**

**Action:** Do not hoard office (pens, paper, folders, etc.) or kitchen (cups, silverware, spices, etc.) supplies. We are experimenting with the central provision of supplies to minimize cost and waste. If you need something that is not provided, please request through your MSO and it will be provided within reason – there is no need to accumulate personal stores of supplies.

**13. Use the conference, huddle, and focus rooms in a respectful and collegial manner by following the guidelines for the use of each of type of space.**

**Action:** Do not forget to remove cancellations from the room scheduling and booking system so that others know when a room has become available.

**Action:** Leave rooms in good order at the conclusion of your meeting – return to original chair/table arrangements, dispose of trash and food/drink containers, and ensure that all equipment is left in the room (e.g., dry erase markers, cables, remote controls, etc.).

**Action:** Remember that there are workstations around all of the meeting rooms – keep the noise and in/out traffic to a minimum at all times.

**Action:** Recognize that huddle and focus rooms are intended to be shared spaces for meetings and conference calls - avoid “camping out” in these rooms when you could be working at your desk.

**Minimize conflict with effective communication**

**14. Should a problem or dispute arise handle it calmly and respectfully.**

**Action:** Be open to feedback and discussing concerns with your co-workers. Give feedback in a constructive manner.

**Action:** Discuss on-going problems with your supervisor.

**Action:** If you have ideas about making the workplace better, discuss them with your co-workers and/or your supervisor who can bring them up at the monthly DCC Building Operations Committee meeting.

**Maintain the security of the building and of your workspace**

**15. Avoid letting people you do not know into CatCard secured spaces and ensure your computer and file cabinets are secure.**

**Action:** It can seem thoughtful to let others into the building or other spaces. However, doing so for someone you don't know can lead to security issues. Respectfully ask those you don't know to check in with the front desk security officer or use their own CatCard to access the building.

**Action:** When you leave your desk, be sure to lock your computer screen and secure sensitive materials (including personal items like purses/wallets) in a locked file cabinet.