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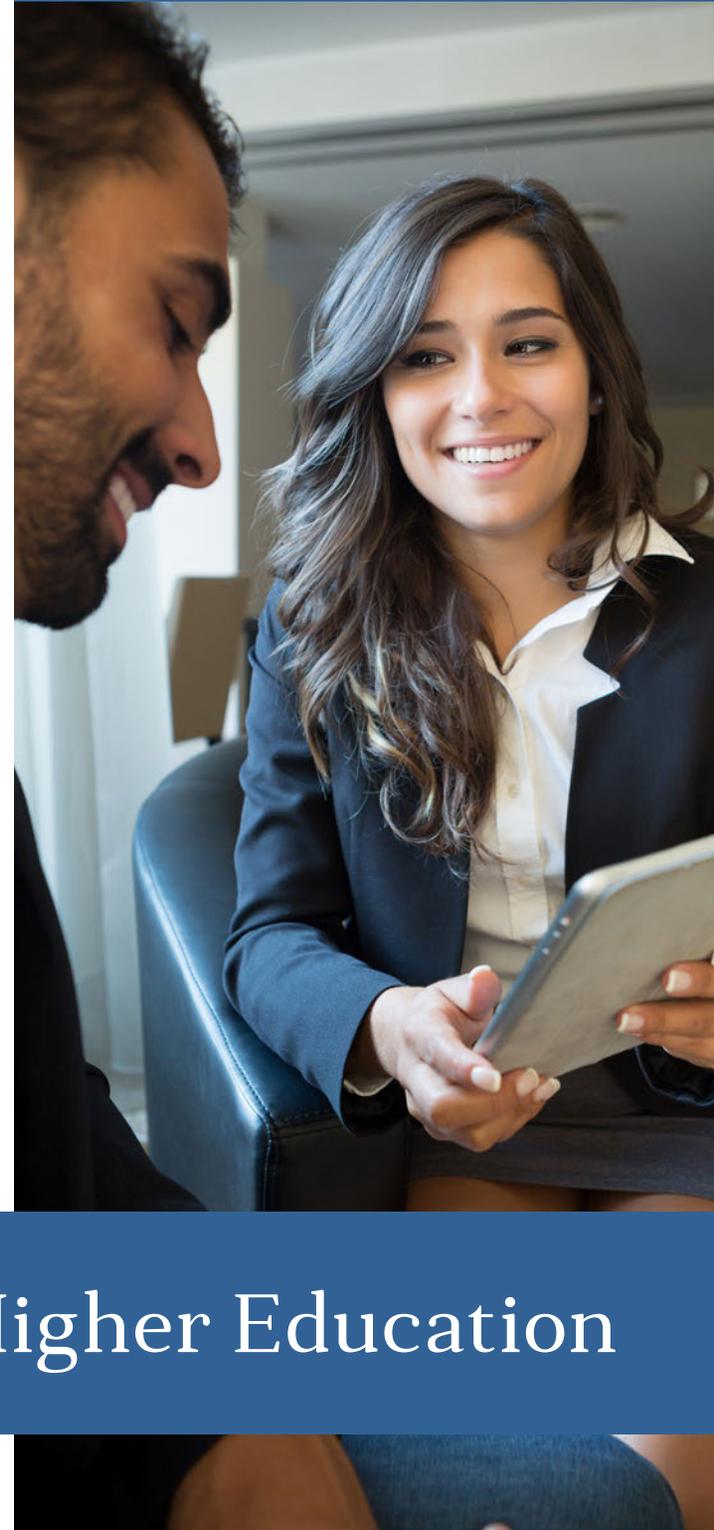
Trends

FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

By Apryl Motley, CAE, SASM



FALL 2023 Trends Outside Higher Education





Trends

Outside Higher Education

Outside the world of higher education, what are some of today's key trends—and what are some implications for institutions of higher learning?

We've organized **Trends** using STEEP:



Social

How people think, behave, and interact, including beliefs, values, culture, and lifestyle



Technology

How people use technology (including hardware and software), how society relies on technology, and how technology affects society



Economic

Macro- or microeconomics, including global trends, anything related to jobs and skills needed for jobs, and industry shifts



Environmental

Our external surroundings, including sustainability and our evolving workplaces, cities, and living spaces



Political

Public policy, governmental systems, the people within them, and the effects of government decisions on our citizens and communities

Each trend includes a brief trend summary, a footnoted source, and discussion questions to help you and your team analyze and act on the trend.

Social Trends

The No Kid Zone

According to recent surveys, growing numbers of Americans would prefer to travel and dine in areas that are child-free. Fifty-nine percent of adults recently surveyed “agreed that a child-free zone on planes and trains would be a positive thing.”¹ In a different survey, 52 percent of Americans indicated that “they didn’t like the presence of children in restaurants.” Sixty-two percent said a child misbehaving at the table next to theirs would spoil their evening.²



A Deeper Dive

While child-free zones on airplanes would be well-received, US airlines have yet to implement them. This is not the case for restaurants. For example, one Seattle-based restaurateur, Tim Ptak, owns restaurants that do not allow children, but he also owns a family-friendly eatery. According to Ptak, the child-free policy has been met with positive feedback: “The beauty of this system is that it allows space for everyone, those with families and those who prefer adults only.”³ However, child-free policies have been the source of much debate and criticism, particularly from children’s rights activists, who say they “stigmatize children and deny them the basic right to exist in public space. The debate gets at wider questions about who is responsible for caring for—and at times, tolerating—the next generation.”⁴

◆ For discussion

- How many students are parents? How many faculty and staff? How often are children brought to campus, and what is that experience like for children and adults?
- Which of our campus dining options are the most kid-friendly? How might we explore designating different dining options based on their suitability for children?
- How would we respond to requests for child-free areas on campus? How are local businesses and other venues in our community responding to requests for child-free areas in their establishments?

- 1 Alice Gibbs, “Child-Free Areas on Planes Are Hugely Popular,” *Newsweek.com*, April 29, 2023, www.newsweek.com/child-free-areas-planes-popular-poll-1797226.
- 2 Anna Wiśniewska, “Put Down the Fork, Playtime’s Over: A 2022 Survey of Americans’ Attitudes Toward Children in Restaurants,” *HiJunior.com*, May 26, 2023, <http://hijunior.com/child/children-in-restaurants>.
- 3 Kelsey Ables and Andrew Jeong, “Is it discrimination if you can’t bring your kids to a restaurant?” *The Washington Post*, May 12, 2023, www.washingtonpost.com/world/2023/05/12/no-kid-zones-south-korea-ban.
- 4 Ibid.

In This Section:

- Creating child-free zones
- Planning for paid parental leave
- Understanding the impact of Long COVID
- Consuming cannabis
- Lifting weights
- Not getting any moral satisfaction
- Going back to church
- Sidebar: Driving nowhere soon



Parents Need PTO

Seventy-four percent of adults support the US Congress passing a law to ensure access to paid family and medical leave.⁵ Yet, according to a national survey of employers conducted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics in March 2022, only 24 percent of private-industry employees had access to paid family leave (i.e., parental leave and family caregiving leave) through their employers. Further, as of last year, the United States is the only Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development member country that does not provide paid leave to new mothers employed in the private sector.⁶ The Center for American Progress reports that while no US federal law provides the right to paid family leave, 11 states have passed paid family and medical leave laws, including California, Massachusetts, Maryland, and New York.⁷ In fact, US senators from these states were among the co-sponsors of the Comprehensive Paid Leave for Federal Employees Act, bipartisan legislation reintroduced earlier to this year to expand federal paid leave to include 12 weeks of family and medical leave.⁸

◆ For discussion

- What kind of paid family leave does our institution offer? How does it compare to peer institutions?
- To what degree have faculty and staff been taking advantage of unpaid parental leave? What trends have emerged?
- What are the potential financial and staffing impacts associated with changing our family leave policy?

5 Amanda Jacobson Snyder, "Majority of Democrats, Republicans Would Support Legislation to Ensure Paid Family Leave, Increased Child Care Funding," *The Morning Consult*, August 1, 2022, <http://pro.morningconsult.com/instant-intel/child-care-tax-credit-paid-family-leave-policies-survey>.

6 Sarah A. Donovan, "Paid Family and Medical Leave in the United States," Congressional Research Service, February 28, 2023, <http://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R44835>.

7 Molly Weston Williamson, "The State of Paid Family and Medical Leave in the U.S. in 2023," The Center for American Progress, January 5, 2023, www.americanprogress.org/article/the-state-of-paid-family-and-medical-leave-in-the-u-s-in-2023.

8 "S.274 - 118th Congress (2023-2024): Comprehensive Paid Leave for Federal Employees Act." Congress.gov, Library of Congress, February 7, 2023, www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/senate-bill/274.



Post-COVID Conditions in a "Post-COVID" World

While life has pretty much returned to normal for most Americans, some are still feeling the lasting impact of the COVID pandemic, literally. Almost 6 percent of US adults are experiencing Long COVID. Of those, 25 percent experience "significant activity limitations" from Long COVID.⁹ "Some people who have been infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 can experience long-term effects from their infection, known as Long COVID or Post-COVID Conditions." While Long COVID may not affect everyone the same way, symptoms commonly associated with it include fatigue, difficulty breathing, dizziness, stomach pain, and change in smell or taste. In July 2021, Long COVID was added as a recognized condition that could result in a disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act.¹⁰ Recent data indicated that as many as four million workers were likely out of work due to Long COVID.¹¹

◆ For discussion

- In what ways is Long COVID currently impacting our campus? Do we have an idea of how many students, faculty, and staff are experiencing Long COVID?
- How can we support those on campus dealing with Long COVID? For example, what accessibility supports are available to students, faculty, and staff?
- How might Long COVID affect our community? For example, which industries or fields in our community are experiencing significant labor shortages that may be attributed to Long COVID?



9 National Center for Health Statistics. U.S. Census Bureau, Household Pulse Survey, 2022-2023. Long COVID. Generated interactively: www.cdc.gov/nchs/covid19/pulse/long-covid.htm.

10 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Long COVID or Post-COVID Conditions," July 20, 2023, www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/long-term-effects/index.html.

11 Katie Bach, "New data shows long Covid is keeping as many as 4 million people out of work," The Brookings Institution, August 24, 2022. www.brookings.edu/articles/new-data-shows-long-covid-is-keeping-as-many-as-4-million-people-out-of-work.

Cannabis Is Mostly Welcome Here

A recent Gallup poll indicated that 68 percent of US adults favor legalizing marijuana. Among those ages 18 to 29, 79 percent support legalizing marijuana use.¹² It's a good thing, since following the November 2022 elections more than 155 million Americans now live in states with legal cannabis.¹³ Further, 23 states and Washington, D.C., have legalized recreational use for adults 21 years and older, while 38 states have legal medical marijuana programs.¹⁴ Increased legalization of cannabis has corresponded to growth in the number of dispensaries opening nationwide. As of 2021, Oklahoma had the largest number of cannabis dispensary licenses in the US, with more than 2,300, followed by Colorado with 825 and California with 774.¹⁵ Given estimates that the cannabis industry will add \$160 billion in spending to the US economy by 2027,¹⁶ a dispensary could be coming to a neighborhood near you. However, according to a recent survey of prospective homeowners, less than half would purchase a home within one mile of a legal marijuana dispensary.

◆ For discussion

- Which of our institution's policies or procedures should be reviewed and potentially revised given changes in cannabis laws?
- How much do we know about the cannabis market in our community? About cannabis use on our campuses?
- What role might we play in educating the community about legal use of cannabis?



12 Jeffrey M. Jones, "Marijuana Views Linked to Ideology, Religiosity, Age," Gallup, November 15, 2022, <http://news.gallup.com/poll/405086/marijuana-views-linked-ideology-religiosity-age.aspx>.

13 Natalie Fertig, Mona Zhang, and Paul Demko, "Nearly half of Americans to reside in states where marijuana is legal," Politico, November 9, 2022, www.politico.com/news/2022/11/09/half-americans-state-marijuana-legal-00065987.

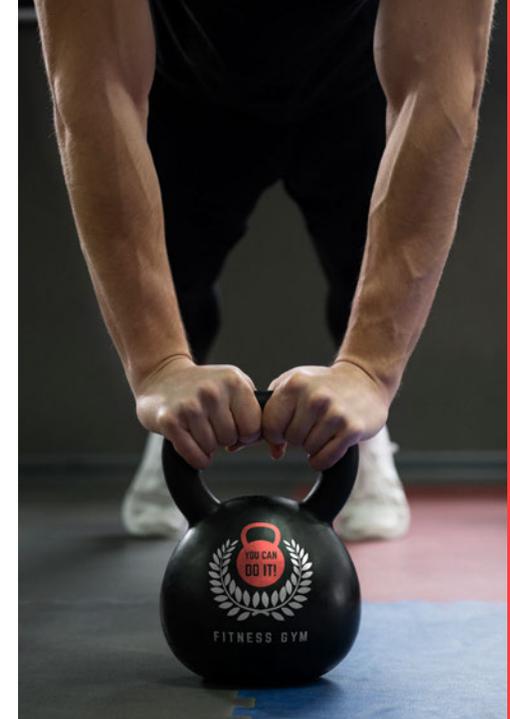
14 Will Yakowicz, "Where Is Cannabis Legal? A Guide To All 50 States," Forbes.com, May 30, 2023, www.forbes.com/sites/willyakowicz/2023/05/30/where-is-cannabis-legal-a-guide-to-all-50-states.

15 Matej Mikulic, "Number of cannabis dispensary licenses in the U.S. as of 2021, by state," Statista.com, February 1, 2023, www.statista.com/statistics/754751/medical-marijuana-dispensaries-number-by-state.

16 Andrew Long, "Cannabis industry will add \$100 billion to US economy in 2023, MJBiz Factbook projects," *MJBiz Daily*, April 12, 2023, <http://mjbizdaily.com/cannabis-industry-will-add-100-billion-to-us-economy-in-2023>.

Picking Up Weight

Something good came out of the pandemic. Americans are getting stronger, or at least they are trying to build more muscle. According to gym owners and industry experts, the pandemic led more people to take up weight training. ClassPass, a subscription-based fitness app, reports that strength training has been the most popular exercise class booked during the past two years, with a 94 percent increase in classes from 2021 to 2022.¹⁷ There's also encouraging news for those just getting started with strength training. According to a new study published in the *British Journal of Medicine*, almost any kind of strength training is beneficial. Researchers found that "every version of resistance training, . . . whether it involved heavy weights or light ones, frequent weekly sessions, and sets or few, resulted in improvements in muscular strength and mass, whatever someone's age or gender."¹⁸



◆ For discussion

- How popular is strength training with our students, faculty, and staff? How do we track health and wellness preferences more broadly?
- How might the popularity of weight training impact our academic programs? For example, could we see more students interested in physical therapy or orthopedic programs?
- What partnership opportunities does this trend present? For example, could we engage with local recreation centers or gyms to provide additional or enhanced strength training resources?

17 CNN, "Americans have changed the way they exercise. Here's how gyms are adapting," February 28, 2023, www.cbsnews.com/atlanta/news/americans-have-changed-the-way-they-exercise-heres-how-gyms-are-adapting.

18 Gretchen Reynolds, "Weight training can be easy and still build strength. Here's how," July 19, 2023, www.washingtonpost.com/wellness/2023/07/19/light-weight-lifting-strength-resistance.



Nobody's Doing the Right Thing

Based on findings from Gallup's recent Mood of the Nation poll, only 20 percent of Americans are very or somewhat satisfied with the country's moral and ethical climate.¹⁹ According to another survey, 53 percent of Americans indicate that moral values in the US are either weak or very weak, and 51 percent believe that US society is less moral now than it was 10 years ago.²⁰ Researchers Adam Mastroianni and Daniel Gilbert, however, argue that our perception of increasing moral decline is an illusion based on our tendency to idealize the past. "People all over the world believe that morality has declined, and they have believed this for as long as researchers have been asking them about it," they write. Illusion or not, this belief may have long-term consequences, as one moral psychologist observed: "If I think that the morality of folks around me is declining, then my pessimism might lead me to lower my own moral standards."²¹

◆ For discussion

- What trends have we seen in reports of academic dishonesty or honor code violations?
- How much do we know about how faculty, students, and staff perceive morals and morality? How does that affect the culture at our institution? For example, have we noticed less trust between different stakeholder groups?
- In what ways might we engage with our institution and the community in discussions about morality and ethics?

19 Lydia Saad, "Americans Still Glum About State of the Union in Most Areas," February 2, 2023, <http://news.gallup.com/poll/469241/americans-glum-state-union-areas.aspx>.

20 Oana Dumitru, "How do Americans think about morality in the U.S. today?" December 17, 2022, <https://today.yougov.com/topics/politics/articles-reports/2022/12/17/how-americans-think-about-morality-us-poll-2022>.

21 Kelsey Ables, "Think we're losing our morals? That's a common illusion, research says." *The Washington Post*, June 15, 2023, www.washingtonpost.com/wellness/2023/06/15/humanity-morality-decline-illusion.



Back in Service

Three years after churches were forced to close their physical doors due to COVID-19 restrictions, many are seeing in-person attendance at their services increase. A new survey indicates that 67 percent of people primarily attend church in-person compared to 38 percent in 2021. Generation Z reported the greatest increase in in-person church attendance, with 52 percent attending church services in person in 2022, and 72 percent doing so in 2023. Only 6 percent of Generation Z reported attending church online.²²

◆ For discussion

- What trends are we seeing in attendance at in-person religious services held on our campuses?
- How much do we know about student demand for in-person religious services?
- In what ways are we currently engaging with local places of worship? What might they be able to share with us about our stakeholders' participation in their services and other activities?

22 Ryan Foley, "Number of Americans attending in-person church services is rising," *The Christian Post*, May 15, 2023, www.christianpost.com/news/number-of-americans-attending-church-in-person-is-rising.html.



Food for Thought

Zoomers Aren't Zooming Around

Getting a driver's license used to be a much-anticipated rite of passage. On reaching the minimum driving age, young adults made a beeline for their local department of motor vehicles. Today's pool of new drivers is in less of a hurry to begin driving.

The reasoning behind Generation Z's (born between 1996 and 2021), or Zoomers', decision to delay driving or forgo it entirely has been the source of much discussion. "Unlike previous generations, they don't see cars as a ticket to freedom or a crucial life milestone." They also express concern about America's car-centric culture, offering the view that "it would be so much better for everyone if public transport were just more accessible," and being "quite conscious of my footprint."²³ The availability of e-scooters, e-bikes, and ridesharing also gives Gen Z more environmentally-friendly transportation options than previous generations.

Economics might also be playing a role. According to one analysis, fewer young adults in the US have access to a car in their households than they did four decades ago. Not having access to a car can correspond to living in households with lower incomes, which tend to drive less. "More generally, young adults' consumption patterns reflect their greater economic precarity relative to prior generations—they have lower earnings, fewer assets, and less wealth than prior generations did at similar ages."²⁴ Along similar lines, research has shown that teens "don't get summer jobs as often as they did even 20 years ago, which means both that they have less need for a license and less money to pay for driving expenses."²⁵

Economic and environmental factors aside, others argue that Gen Z's tendency toward car-free living won't last and that they will obtain driver's licenses and buy cars as they age. According to Rutgers professor of planning Kelcie Ralph, "the moment they no longer live on a college campus or in one of the handful of places where they don't have to have a car, they will purchase one. The US is an autocentric country, and if you don't have one, you'll be left behind."²⁶

◆ For discussion

- How many of our students have a driver's license? How many have access to a car?
- If fewer students are driving to or on campus, what policies and guidelines might we need to adopt or revise?
- How many of our students experience economic precarity? What kind of "skills gap" do these students have, and how might we help them bridge it?



23 Shannon Osaka, "I'll call an Uber or 911: Why Gen Z doesn't want to drive," *The Washington Post*, February 13, 2023, www.washingtonpost.com/climate-solutions/2023/02/13/gen-z-driving-less-uber.

24 Christopher Severen, "Why are young people driving less? Evidence points to economics, not preferences," *The Brookings Institution*, March 24, 2023, www.brookings.edu/articles/why-are-young-people-driving-less-evidence-points-to-economics-not-preferences.

25 Joel Mathis, "Why U.S. teens aren't getting their driver's licenses," *The Week*, February 16, 2023, <http://theweek.com/travel/1020987/why-us-teens-arent-getting-their-drivers-licenses>.

26 David Zipper, "Gen Z's Turn Against Driving Is a Mirage," *Bloomberg*, March 1, 2023, www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-03-01/is-gen-z-really-done-with-driving-cars-don-t-bet-on-it.



Technology Trends

In This Section:

- Understanding how consumers really feel about AI
- Wearing our tech out
- Monitoring patients remotely
- Computing on the edge
- Blocking the chain
- Phoning the day away
- Augmenting reality fashionably
- Sidebar: Increasing availability of drones



Giving AI the Side Eye

As far as most consumers older than 18 are concerned, the jury is still out on whether artificial intelligence (AI) will help or hinder them when brands use it to influence their customer experience. According to one survey, nearly half (48 percent) of all consumers would interact with AI more frequently if it would make their customer experience more seamless, consistent, and convenient.²⁷ At the same time, more than 75 percent of consumers are concerned about AI causing misinformation, which “highlight[s] the importance of businesses focusing on the accuracy and trustworthiness of AI-generated content.”²⁸ For another segment of consumers, transparency is key to how they feel about businesses implementing AI. About 78 percent feel brands should reveal that a particular service is delivered using AI, and the same percentage indicated that brands should tell consumers when they are having interactions powered by AI.²⁹ As one researcher noted, “while the value of AI may be apparent to marketers, consumer perception of this technology isn’t as clear.”³⁰



◆ For discussion

- How much do we know about our stakeholders’ perceptions of AI? How do these perceptions differ between different groups (e.g., between faculty and students)?
- What AI services do we currently deploy (e.g., chatbots, spam filters, etc.)? What has been the reaction of our campus community to these services?
- What kinds of policies might we need to develop governing the adoption and use of AI? How might we explore them further?

27 “73% of Consumers Believe AI can have a Positive Impact on their Customer Experience,” Businesswire.com, January 31, 2023, www.businesswire.com/news/home/20230131005091/en/73-of-Consumers-Believe-AI-can-have-a-Positive-Impact-on-their-Customer-Experience.

28 Kathy Haan, “Over 75% Of Consumers Are Concerned About Misinformation From Artificial Intelligence,” Forbes.com, June 14, 2023, www.forbes.com/advisor/business/artificial-intelligence-consumer-sentiment.

29 Karthik Kashyap, “Consumers Want Brands To Be Transparent About AI Usage To Increase Adoption,” Spiceworks.com, April 12, 2023, www.spiceworks.com/marketing/ai-in-marketing/articles/consumers-want-brands-to-be-transparent-about-ai-usage.

30 Amy Onorato, “Report: Consumers Open To AI In Marketing, But Privacy Concerns Remain,” CDP.com, May 3, 2022, <http://cdp.com/articles/report-consumers-open-to-ai-in-marketing-but-privacy-concerns-remain>.



What a Smart Outfit

According to one survey, 30 percent of adults use wearable health devices, and of those, nearly half wear the devices every day. Industry experts forecast that the revenue generated from such usage will increase exponentially in just a few years: “The global wearable technology market size is expected to reach \$186.14 billion by 2030.” What’s behind the appeal of wearable devices? “Consumers who purchase smart wearables, such as smart apparel, smart footwear, and smartwatches, do so primarily to use the products to track their health and fitness.”³¹ Work is already under way on advancements to the technology behind wearables that will allow for a shift from fitness devices to holistic health devices like smart clothing. “These devices utilize interwoven electric sensors in clothing with varying capabilities, such as diagnostic, therapeutic, and preventative measures, and can provide an optimized point-of-care platform to patients.” For example, smart clothes that can sense when an athlete has healed from injury are currently in the clinical trial phase.³²

◆ For discussion

- How much do we know about the use of smart clothing at our institution?
- What are the potential risks to the institution (e.g., access to sensitive health data) associated with wide-spread wearable use?
- How might wearables, like smart clothing, impact students in the future? For example, how could wearables affect teaching and learning? Health and wellness?

31 “Wearable Technology Market Size, Share & Trends Analysis Report By Product, By Application, By Region And Segment Forecasts, 2023 – 2030,” GlobeNewswire, February 28, 2023, www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2023/02/28/2617473/0/en/Wearable-Technology-Market-Size-Share-Trends-Analysis-Report-By-Product-By-Application-By-Region-And-Segment-Forecasts-2023-2030.html.

32 Allyson Hein, “2023 Wearable Device Trends,” Clarkston Consulting, January 30, 2023, <http://clarkstonconsulting.com/insights/2023-wearable-device-trends>.

Not Those RPMs

Remote patient monitoring (RPM), which involves using mobile devices to check patients’ vital signs while they are at home, is growing in adoption. The technology could improve quality of care by increasing communication between patients and physicians while decreasing the number of unnecessary visits to offices, hospitals, and clinics.³³ One trend driving adoption of RPM is big data. “Big data is already having a profound impact on the healthcare field in areas from oncology to neurology, cardiology, genomics, and other specialties with more personalized therapies and diagnostic tools. And patient-specific data is increasingly available through a new generation of devices and applications that collect information through wearables, home monitors, and smartphones.” RPM systems can be used to collect this information and will likely play a role in enabling analysis of healthcare-related Big Data.³⁴

◆ For discussion

- What are the potential impacts that remote patient monitoring devices may have on our institution—in particular, on delivery of medical care at campus health centers?
- How might RPM tools help us achieve our intended outcomes for providing student care differently?
- What policies and guidelines might we need to adopt regarding the use of RPM tools?

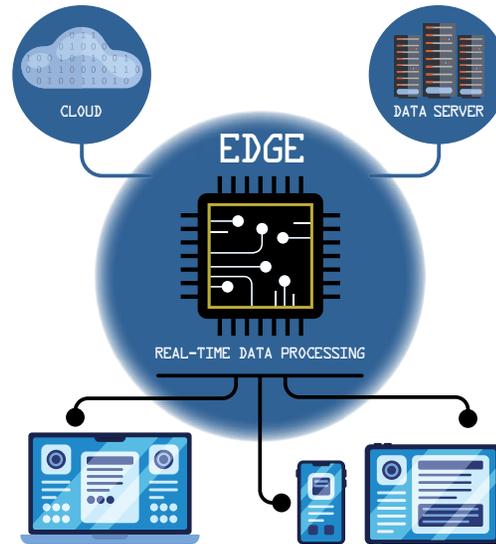


33 “The latest trends in remote patient monitoring,” *Omnia Health Magazine*, April 12, 2023, <http://insights.omnia-health.com/technology/latest-trends-remote-patient-monitoring>.

34 “Real-time and Remote Patient Monitoring Trends,” TE Connectivity, Accessed June 23, 2023, www.te.com/usa-en/whitepapers/sensors/real-time-and-remote-patient-monitoring-trends.html.

On the Edge of Computing

Remote work may be ushering in another change: edge computing. Edge computing refers to processing data in real time without connecting to a data center or the cloud, saving time and money while potentially increasing security and agility. US government agencies are already leveraging edge computing as “an effective way to bring resources closer to their employees and enable remote work.” The National Security Agency, for example, launched a program for “procuring devices that can connect to sensitive environments—even across public networks.”³⁵ Other use cases for edge computing include remote monitoring of oil and gas assets, predictive maintenance of equipment, and city traffic management.³⁶ Some industry analysts predict that 75 percent of enterprise-generated data will be created and processed outside a traditional centralized data center or cloud by 2025.³⁷ Others acknowledge the security risks associated with edge computing, saying “it presents a new attack surface that bad actors can use to compromise data confidentiality, app integrity, and service availability.”³⁸



◆ For discussion

- How is edge computing being used at our institution?
- What is the current experience of students, faculty, and staff who access institutional data remotely? For example, do we require the use of a VPN or other security measures? How do they describe the pros and cons of their experience?
- What guidelines are in place governing the use of edge computing? For example, what measures are in place to ensure the security of data processed remotely?

35 Sven Rasmussen and Luke Schiavone, “The Rise of Edge Computing,” *FedTech Magazine*, June 13, 2023, <http://fedtechmagazine.com/article/2023/06/rise-edge-computing>.

36 Nikolai Siersted, “10 Edge computing use case examples,” STL Partners, Accessed June 23, 2023, <http://stlpartners.com/articles/edge-computing/10-edge-computing-use-case-examples>.

37 Rob van der Meulen, “What Edge Computing Means for Infrastructure and Operations Leaders,” Gartner, October 3, 2018, www.gartner.com/smarterwithgartner/what-edge-computing-means-for-infrastructure-and-operations-leaders.

38 Taryn Plumb, “Security risks threaten the benefits of the edge,” March 13, 2023, <http://venturebeat.com/security/security-risks-threaten-the-benefits-of-the-edge>.

Chains of Traceability and Transparency

While blockchain technology has been infamously associated with cryptocurrency, it has numerous practical uses. Chief among these are traceability and transparency. For instance, blockchain is being used in the pharmaceutical industry to ensure the provenance of its products. In general, enterprise executives are continuing to explore “how blockchain can be used to create more effective, efficient, and secure platforms for various business needs, including identity and access management, supply chain management, smart contracts, and document management and verification.” Despite these potential benefits, there are downsides to implementing technology, most notably increased risk of fraud and corruption as well as a corresponding increase in regulation and legal scrutiny. In addition, the costs of implementation are prohibitive. As such, industry analysts advise against associating exploration with adoption, saying that “executives in most industries, particularly those outside the financial sector, have yet to see any platforms built with blockchain that justify the cost of replacing the systems they already have.”³⁹

◆ For discussion

- What efforts are under way to investigate uses for blockchain technology at our institution?
- How much do we know about the use of blockchain technology at our peer institutions?
- How are we addressing blockchain technology in our curricula—in particular, in courses outside of finance and technology?

39 Mary K. Pratt, “5 must-know blockchain trends for 2023 and beyond,” *Tech Target*, April 17, 2023, www.techtarget.com/searchcio/feature/7-must-know-blockchain-trends.

Attached at the Hip (and Hand and Nightstand and . . .)

According to a recent survey, Americans remain very attached to their mobile phones. More than half said they were addicted to their cell phones. Other usage trends of note include 89 percent of Americans checking their phones within the first 10 minutes of waking up, 60 percent sleeping with their phones at night, and 55 percent never going longer than 24 hours without their cell phones.⁴⁰ So how are we spending all this time on our cell phones? Ninety percent of mobile time is spent using apps. In addition, 79 percent of smartphone users have used their mobile devices to make purchases.⁴¹ Evidence is emerging that peoples' dependency on their mobile devices may be changing how they think. As one commentator observed, "it's a vicious circle. The more useful our phones become, the more we use them. The more we use them, the more we lay neural pathways in our brains that lead [us] to pick up our phones for whatever task is at hand—and the more we feel an urge to check our phone even when we don't have to."⁴²

◆ For discussion

- What are our current policies governing cell phone usage at our institution (e.g., in offices, classrooms, and public spaces)? In what ways do our processes and procedures (e.g., registering for classes) encourage cell phone usage by students and faculty?
- What are the impacts of high cell phone usage on campus? What benefits have we noticed? What harms?
- How might we explore ways to offer faculty, students, and staff more opportunities for cell phone-free interactions?



40 Alex Kerai, "2023 Cell Phone Usage Statistics: Mornings Are for Notifications" Reviewers.org, July 21, 2023, www.reviews.org/mobile/cell-phone-addiction.

41 Jack Flynn, "20 Vital Smartphone Usage Statistics [2023]: Facts, Data, and Trends on Mobile Use in the U.S." Zippia.com, April 3, 2023, www.zippia.com/advice/smartphone-usage-statistics.

42 Amanda Ruggeri, "How mobile phones have changed our brains," BBC.com, April 3, 2023, www.bbc.com/future/article/20230403-how-cellphones-have-changed-our-brains.

AR You Sure That Dress Will Fit?

As a new immersive technology, augmented reality (AR) is being adopted by online retailers in hopes of creating enhanced customer experiences. For example, AR enables virtual try on technology that allows consumers to see how clothing will look on them, or what a painting will look like on the wall of their home before buying it.⁴³ Many customers prefer this virtual try-and-buy retail model that allows them to sample products before purchasing them. According to a recent survey, 56 percent of shoppers said that AR gives them more confidence about the quality of a product, and 61 percent said they prefer to shop with retailers that offer AR experiences.⁴⁴ Retailers also appear to benefit from the investment in AR. Early adopters of Snap, an AR commerce product, report increased sales and fewer returns.⁴⁵

◆ For discussion

- How much do we know about our stakeholders' perceptions of AR? How do these perceptions differ between different groups (e.g., between faculty and students)?
- What AR technologies do we currently deploy or are we considering deploying? In what ways might they be most useful (e.g., student and faculty recruitment, teaching and learning, etc.)?
- What kinds of policies might we need to develop governing the adoption and use of AR? How might we explore them further?



43 Demond Cureton, "How is Augmented Reality Transforming the Retail Industry?" *XR Today*, June 5, 2023, www.xrtoday.com/augmented-reality/how-is-augmented-reality-transforming-the-retail-industry.

44 Sandeep R. Chandukala, Srinivas K. Reddy, and Yong-Chin Tan, "How Augmented Reality Can — and Can't — Help Your Brand," *Harvard Business Review*, March 29, 2022, <http://hbr.org/2022/03/how-augmented-reality-can-and-cant-help-your-brand>.

45 "Retailers Try on AR to Get More Consumers to Buy," *PYMNTS*, March 27, 2023, www.pymnts.com/news/retail/2023/retailers-try-on-augmented-reality-convert-more-consumers.



Food for Thought

In the Drone Zone

There is growing demand for unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV)—better known as drones—in the commercial sector, and it's likely we'll be seeing more of them almost everywhere. Much of the growth in the commercial drone industry was sparked seven years ago when the Federal Aviation Administration granted hundreds of new exemptions for companies to operate drones in the US.⁴⁶ Since that time, the drone market grew to \$26.6 billion in 2022 and is expected to be worth \$77.49 billion by 2030.⁴⁷

More businesses see the advantages of drones as dependable instruments for collecting limitless aerial data and giving real-time visibility into their operations.

Agriculture, construction, and energy are the top industries that use drone technology, representing nearly 38 percent of drone applications, with energy constituting 15 percent of the industry, construction contributing 13 percent, and agriculture accounting for nearly 10 percent.

The top commercial uses of drones are mapping and surveying (30 percent), inspections (23 percent), and photography and filming (9 percent).⁴⁸ Drones can accomplish these tasks more quickly, safely, and accurately than human labor.

In addition to their efficiency and accuracy, drones are now very affordable. Once relegated to military use due to high costs, drones can now be purchased for less than \$100.⁴⁹ The newfound affordability of drones led to online retailers like Amazon testing their use for deliveries in Canada and the United Kingdom.

Here in the US, everyone isn't happy about expanded use of drones for commercial purposes. Most critics cite privacy concerns. "Widespread use of drones is anticipated to increase privacy concerns among citizens nervous about corporate and government data collection."⁵⁰ In fact, at least 44 states have enacted laws addressing drones. "State legislatures continue to debate if and how drone technology should be regulated, considering the benefits of their use, privacy concerns, and their potential economic impact."⁵¹

46 "Drone market outlook in 2023: industry growth trends, market stats and forecast." *Insider Intelligence*, January 7, 2023, www.insiderintelligence.com/insights/drone-industry-analysis-market-trends-growth-forecasts.

47 "Future Of Drone Industry: Trends, Regional Overview and Major Developments," *Strategic Market Research*, March 2023, www.strategicmarketresearch.com/blogs/drone-industry-future.

48 Ibid.

49 Trevir I. Nath, "How Drones Are Changing the Business World," *Investopedia.com*, January 16, 2022, www.investopedia.com/articles/investing/010615/how-drones-are-changing-business-world.asp.

50 Ibid.

51 "Current Unmanned Aircraft State Law Landscape," *National Conference of State Legislatures*, March 27, 2023, www.ncsl.org/transportation/current-unmanned-aircraft-state-law-landscape.



◆ For discussion

- How are drones used at our institution and on our campus? What are the potential impacts that the use of drones may have on our institution?
- What are new uses for drones that might be beneficial for our institution? For example, could drones help us monitor building conditions? Collect data for research?
- What policies and guidelines might we need to adopt regarding the use of drones at our institution?



Economic Trends

In This Section:

- Selling used items online
- Crumbling commercial real estate
- Seeking a returnship
- Failing banks
- Seeking service workers
- Losing confidence in leadership
- Searching for security leaders
- Stopping meeting mania

Reduce, Resell, Recycle

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in an uptick in secondhand shopping as consumers sought value at lower prices. As a result, the resale market is growing even faster than traditional retail.⁵² According to one survey, 40 percent of Americans sold items online during the pandemic.⁵³ By doing so, they contributed to the growing trend of recommerce. “Online peer-to-peer marketplace sites—such as eBay, Craigslist, Facebook Marketplace, and other platforms—have made it easier than ever for private individuals to make a quick buck selling unwanted items. . . . An online resale business can be lucrative, whether you have a lot of personal items to sell or you bargain-hunt at yard sales, thrift stores, or flea markets for merchandise.”⁵⁴



A Deeper Dive

Both sellers’ and buyers’ participation in recommerce is motivated primarily by economic concerns. Based on a 2022 consumer survey, 93 percent of Americans said inflation impacted their decision to buy and sell pre-owned goods, suggesting that making and saving money is accelerating the growth of recommerce. Further, more than 50 percent of Americans indicated that obtaining bargain prices was their top motivator, while 40 percent cited earning an easy passive income. But sustainability was an important factor for others, with 21 percent indicating that a reduced carbon footprint motivated them to shop recommerce.⁵⁵



◆ For discussion

- If our institution has a property disposition department, how has this trend affected that department? What additional revenue opportunities might this trend represent?
- How much do we know about the economic impact of reselling on our faculty, staff, and students? Do rates of reselling indicate that there are faculty, staff, and students experiencing financial difficulties?
- What do we know about the relationship between reselling and sustainability? How else can we discourage “throw it out” rapid consumerism? For example, using a maker space to hold repair workshops for those interested?

52 Jessica Dickler, “Secondhand shopping is booming: Here’s how much you can save,” CNBC.com, September 14, 2022, www.cnbc.com/2022/09/14/secondhand-shopping-is-booming-heres-how-much-you-can-save.html.

53 Kamaron McNair, “Nearly 40% of Americans Sold Items Online Amid Pandemic, Netting Average of \$1,810,” MagnifyMoney.com, March 15, 2021, www.magnifymoney.com/news/selling-online-pandemic-survey.

54 Adam Uzialko, “Got Old Stuff? Start a Side Hustle by Selling It,” *Business News Daily*, February 21, 2023, www.businessnewsdaily.com/10323-resale-business-online-marketplaces.html.

55 “OfferUp’s 2022 Recommerce Report Reveals Record-Breaking Growth In U.S. Recommerce Amid Increasing Inflation and Recession Fears,” August 30, 2022, www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/offerups-2022-recommerce-report-reveals-record-breaking-growth-in-us-recommerce-amid-increasing-inflation-and-recession-fears-301614165.html.



A Lot of Office Space (But Not a Lot of Flair)

These days less work is getting done in actual offices as many Americans who started working from home during the pandemic continue to work remotely. According to a Stanford University economist who has researched remote work for two decades, the amount of full-time work accomplished remotely has increased five times since 2019, from 5 percent of work completed remotely to 25 percent today.⁵⁶ The increase in remote work has had and will continue to have a significant impact on the US commercial real estate market. Across the country, offices sit vacant or underused, causing industry analysts to express concerns about the “downturn in the \$20 trillion US commercial real estate market.” Commercial rental prices are down 15 percent,⁵⁷ and the national US office vacancy rate has reached 17.1 percent.⁵⁸ As one analyst and commercial real estate investor observed, “with many economists forecasting a recession later in the year, the risk is increasing that properties may get foreclosed if tenants can’t pay rent, lease payments, or if disappointing earnings force companies to cut back office rentals and leases.”⁵⁹

◆ For discussion

- How much vacant office space do we have on our campus? In our community?
- How has vacant office space impacted the economic well-being of our community?
- In what ways could we partner with local organizations to address vacant office space in our community? Are there opportunities to repurpose this space to the benefit of the community?

56 Greg Iacurci, “Full-time office work is ‘dead’: 3 labor experts weigh in on the future of remote work,” CNBC.com, March 3, 2023, www.cnbc.com/2023/03/03/the-future-of-remote-work-labor-experts-weigh-in.html.

57 Julia Horowitz, “American offices are half-empty. That could be the next big risk for banks,” CNN.com, April 10, 2023, www.cnn.com/2023/04/10/business/commercial-real-estate-banks-offices/index.html.

58 Evelyn Jozsa, “U.S. Office Sales Total \$14.8B Halfway Through 2023,” Commercial Edge, July 19, 2023, www.commercialedge.com/blog/national-office-report.

59 Zain Jaffer, “Bracing For A Possible Commercial Real Estate Crash,” Forbes.com, May 1, 2023, www.forbes.com/sites/forbesbusinesscouncil/2023/05/01/bracing-for-a-possible-commercial-real-estate-crash.

Reentering the Workforce? Get an Internship

Internships aren’t just for high school and college students. Experienced professionals in various fields who’ve taken a break from their careers are finding that internships, or “returnships” as they’ve been dubbed, are an important vehicle for reentering the workforce. “Returnships are employment opportunities designed for experienced professionals who have been away for a while and who are looking to re-up, re-skill, and transition back into the workforce. They’re like internships but for those who have already had careers.”⁶⁰ According to a recent survey, people seek returnships for the paycheck (68 percent), to update their skills (48 percent), and for a supportive environment (39 percent).⁶¹ Returnships are just as appealing to employers as they help them to “look more broadly and compete harder for talent” and “create a more inclusive workforce in terms of gender, age, ethnic and social background, and job experiences.”⁶² Several major corporations offer returnships, including AWS’ Returners, LEAP at Microsoft, REACH at LinkedIn, and Recharge at PayPal.⁶³

◆ For discussion

- How could returnships help us address labor shortages at our institution? Which departments would be likely candidates for hosting returnships?
- How could we explore the possibility of offering returnships at our institution? What types of services and support would we need to provide?
- In our region, what industries are good candidates for offering returnships? How could we partner with employers to facilitate returnship programs that retrain and upskill adult learners?

60 Tracy Brower, “Get Hired And Re-Launch Your Career In The Most Unexpected Way: A Returnship,” Forbes.com, May 14, 2023, www.forbes.com/sites/tracybrower/2023/05/14/get-hired-and-re-launch-your-career-in-the-most-unexpected-way-a-returnship.

61 Ibid.

62 John Timpane, “More Companies Are Offering Internships for Adults,” AARP.org, January 22, 2020, www.aarp.org/work/job-search/returnships-adult-internships.

63 Ibid.

Don't (Regionally) Bank on It

Both Silicon Valley Bank and Signature Bank failed earlier this year, suffering two of the largest bank failures in US history. The failures of SVB and Signature, the 16th and 29th largest banks in the US, respectively, based on asset value, were attributed to risky business strategies and weak risk management.⁶⁴ Following these two financial institutions, First Republic Bank became the third regional lender to fail this year.⁶⁵ Some financial analysts believe that the banking crisis is just beginning. One analyst, citing ongoing issues like unrealized losses on existing assets and “digital bank runs,” summarizes, “. . . the macro environment for vulnerable small and regional banks has considerably deteriorated in recent months, making it unclear when and how this crisis will end. The bottom line: the regional banking crisis in the United States is still not over.”⁶⁶



◆ For discussion

- How is the health of the financial institutions our college or university works with? What mechanisms do we have in place for evaluating and monitoring their health?
- How have recent bank failures impacted higher education institutions like ours?
- What contingencies do we have in place to manage the risk of a financial institution with which we do business failing?

Help Still Wanted

As businesses reopened following the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, many service industries are still suffering from labor shortages. As one employee expert observed, “jobs that require in-person attendance and traditionally have lower wages have had a more difficult time retaining workers.” For instance, the food services industry has the highest quit rate at above 4.9 percent, with the quit rate for the retail trade industry not far behind at a rate of around 3.3 percent so far this year.⁶⁷ What will it take to bring workers back to food and retail establishments? One pizza chain CEO claims that the solution lies in building “a company for our workforce, not despite them.” The chain provides health benefits and paid sick leave as well as paid time off for voting and implemented a text-based communication platform that allows employees to share their views with management. “Our strategy has paid off,” this CEO said. “We haven’t been hurt by the so-called labor shortage because we built a business model around taking care of those who take care of us.”⁶⁸

◆ For discussion

- In which departments at our institution (e.g., dining halls) are we still experiencing labor shortages? How well do we understand what’s driving those shortages?
- What strategies could we implement to address these shortages and attract and retain more employees?
- Have we seen labor shortages in our community or region? How can we partner with local employers to help them attract and retain employees?



64 “March 2023 Bank Failures—Risky Business Strategies Raise Questions About Federal Oversight,” U.S. Government Accountability Office, April 28, 2023, www.gao.gov/blog/march-2023-bank-failures-risky-business-strategies-raise-questions-about-federal-oversight.

65 David Gura, “New signs of banking turmoil after First Republic Bank’s failure — the third in 2023,” NPR.org, May 14, 2023, www.npr.org/2023/05/04/1174083626/new-signs-of-banking-turmoil-after-first-republic-banks-failure-the-third-in-2023.

66 Kavaljit Singh, “The 2023 US Regional Banking Crisis Is Far From Over,” *The Wire*, May 11, 2023, thewire.in/banking/us-regional-banking-crisis-far-from-over.

67 Stephanie Ferguson, “Understanding America’s Labor Shortage: The Most Impacted Industries,” USChamber.com, July 12, 2023, www.uschamber.com/workforce/understanding-americas-labor-shortage-the-most-impacted-industries.

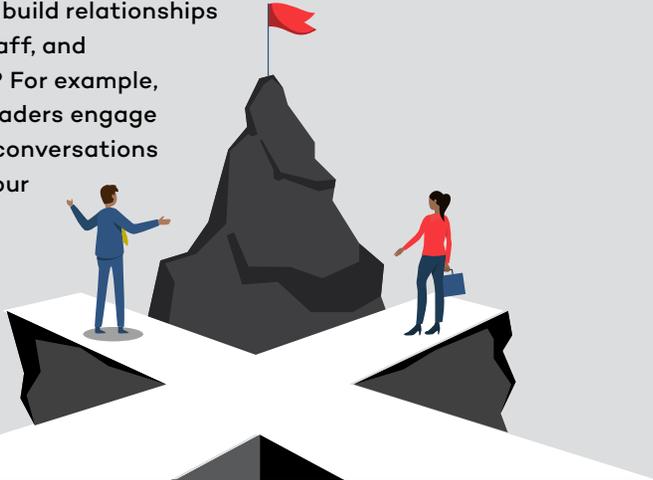
68 Michael Lastoria and Katie Bach, “We are fast food executives: If our industry is to survive, workers need a greater voice,” *FastCompany.com*, January 20, 2022, www.fastcompany.com/90714685/we-are-fast-food-executives-if-our-industry-is-to-survive-workers-need-a-greater-voice.

Lacking Leadership

Employees' confidence in the leaders at the helm of their organizations is at an all-time low. Based on one survey, only 40 percent of managers see their companies' top ranks as high-quality leaders.⁶⁹ According to another poll, only 21 percent of US employees strongly agree that they trust the leadership of their organizations. However, 95 percent fully trust their leaders when they demonstrate skill in implementing three specific actions: (1) communicating clearly, (2) inspiring confidence in the future, and (3) leading and supporting change. Communication, more specifically one-on-one conversations with employees, is key to establishing and rebuilding trust: "... it's those invaluable two-way conversations, especially during times of disruption, which are essential to building confidence and trust." Employees who have had opportunities to provide honest feedback about organizational changes are 7.4 times as likely to have confidence in their leaders' ability to successfully manage challenges.⁷⁰

◆ For discussion

- How much do faculty, staff, and administrators trust the leadership of our institution? How do we know? How does that trust differ for each group?
- What mechanisms are in place for obtaining faculty, staff, and administrator feedback about organizational challenges?
- How do leaders build relationships with faculty, staff, and administration? For example, how often do leaders engage in one-on-one conversations with people at our institution?



69 Tony Case, "Confidence in leadership drops to lowest level in a decade," *WorkLife Daily Briefing*, March 6, 2023, www.worklife.news/leadership/confidence-in-leadership-drops-to-lowest-level-in-a-decade.

70 Denise McLain and Ryan Pendell, "Why Trust in Leaders Is Faltering and How to Gain It Back," *Gallup.com*, April 17, 2023, www.gallup.com/workplace/473738/why-trust-leaders-faltering-gain-back.aspx.

Now You CISO Me, Now You Don't

Chief information security officers (CISOs) are next in line for The Great Resignation, according to industry experts. One recent study found that 32 percent of CISOs in the UK and US have considered leaving their positions, and many planned to do so in just six months. The majority gave a lack of work-life balance as their top reason for leaving. "The CISO role is demanding, with firefighting and frequent changes in regulations and customer expectations taking up significant time, both on and off the job." Even so, according to another study, 75 percent of CISOs were satisfied with their jobs, with compensation, budget, executive visibility, and organizational support being the main drivers of job satisfaction. Yet, 44 percent of respondents were still considering a job change.⁷¹ What will it take for them to stay on the job? One CISO offered this perspective: "Serving as a CISO can offer great rewards when an organization appreciates and respects that person and gives them the tools they need to succeed. How a CISO gets treated by other members of the executive team makes a difference and may serve as the deciding factor between changing career trajectory or continuing to deliver critical value and business benefits."⁷²

◆ For discussion

- How much do we understand about the demands placed on our institution's information security leadership and other members of the information security team?
- What role do information security and other IT leadership play in institutional strategy and decision-making? Would they describe themselves as valued members of the cabinet?
- What trends have we seen in our ability to recruit and retain information security staff (e.g., average tenure of their employment)?

71 Rick Crandall, "The Great CISO Resignation: NCC Calls For Board-Level Executive Sessions with Chief Information Security Officer," *National Cybersecurity Center*, February 14, 2023, <http://cyber-center.org/the-great-ciso-resignation>.

72 Dave Stapleton, "Why are CISOs resigning?" *SCMagazine.com*, November 21, 2022, www.scmagazine.com/perspective/why-are-cisos-resigning.





Food for Thought

We Have to Stop Meeting Like This

“Let’s add another meeting to the calendar!” said no one ever. Many Americans don’t find the meetings they attend at work helpful or useful. According to one estimate, US workers spend an average of 31 hours per month in meetings they consider unproductive.⁷³

Microsoft’s recent survey of 31,000 workers across the globe revealed similar trends about the negative impact meetings can have on productivity in workplaces. Respondents indicated that inefficient meetings are the No. 1 workplace distraction that hurts productivity, followed closely by having too many meetings. Additionally, “nearly two in three people, regardless of if they are working remotely, in-person, or on a hybrid schedule, say they struggle with having the time and energy to do their job because of meetings and email bloat.”⁷⁴

Organizations like Shopify have instituted new policies to give their employees a much-needed break from meetings. In January Shopify introduced policies canceling all recurring meetings with more than three people and restricting all meetings on Wednesday. The company anticipates that its engineering, product, and user experience teams will complete approximately 25 percent more projects this year compared to last year due to the policy changes.⁷⁵



◆ For discussion

- How much time do our institution’s faculty, staff, and administration spend in meetings? How much of that time do they consider productive?
- How can we reduce unnecessary meeting time at our institution? How feasible would it be for us to implement meeting-free days or other timesaving strategies across our institution?
- What kinds of resources can we make available to assist faculty and staff in hosting more productive and efficient meetings?

73 Alyson Krueger, “That Meeting Was Too Long (and It Probably Could’ve Been an Email),” *The New York Times*, April 7, 2023, www.nytimes.com/2023/04/07/business/office-meetings-time.html?searchResultPosition=1.

74 Morgan Smith, “The No. 1 workplace distraction that kills productivity, according to Microsoft,” *CNBC.com*, May 9, 2023, www-cnbcm-com.cdn.ampproject.org/c/s/www.cnbcm-com/amp/2023/05/09/the-no-1-workplace-distraction-that-kills-productivity-according-to-microsoft.html.

75 Lindsey Wilkinson, “Shopify expects productivity boost from meeting ban,” *CIO Dive*, March 24, 2023, www.ciodive.com/news/Shopify-meeting-ban-productivity-remote-work/645969.



Environmental Trends

In This Section:

- Conserving wildlife
- Generating green gasoline
- Blowing in the wind
- Weakening the world's water supply
- Tracking sustainability in the supply chain
- Turning transit around
- Understanding reasons for not recycling
- Sidebar: Giving back while vacationing

Endangered No More

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) turns 50 this year. According to the US Department of the Interior, which administers ESA, the legislation has been very effective in conserving the nation's wildlife. The agency reports that the ESA is responsible for saving 99 percent of the species on the endangered list from extinction. Among the more notable species saved from extinction are the bald eagle, the Kirtland's warbler (a small, yellow-bellied songbird), and the American alligator. In summary: "The Act has saved hundreds of species from extinction and continues to protect and preserve some of our most beloved animals and plants. It has also helped to create a better understanding of how human activities can impact the environment and how we can work together to protect it. Perhaps most importantly, this anniversary is a reminder that conservation efforts are essential for stemming the worsening impacts of climate change, protecting biodiversity, and preserving our planet for ourselves and future generations."⁷⁶



◆ For discussion

- What do we know about any specific species or wildlife that are endangered in the ecosystem near our institution? How does that knowledge inform decisions we make about our physical environment and operations?
- Have we examined the impact our institution's activities or operations might be having on local wildlife? How might we explore this issue?
- In what ways could we support existing wildlife conservation efforts?



⁷⁶ "The Endangered Species Act: Celebrating 50 Years of Success in Wildlife Conservation," U.S. Department of the Interior, February 13, 2023, www.doi.gov/blog/endangered-species-act-celebrating-50-years-success-wildlife-conservation.



E-Fuels Equal Fewer Emissions

What do Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, and South Dakota have in common? They are among the US states that grow the most corn⁷⁷ and are the windiest in the country,⁷⁸ a winning combination for generating renewable energy. “Every year, Midwest states produce millions of gallons of ethanol and thousands of kilowatt-hours (kWhs) of electricity from wind farms—energy sources already helping lower greenhouse gas emissions.” A project is under way in hopes of further channeling these energy sources in cutting emissions. Scientists at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) and other DOE national laboratories are developing electrolyzers, which use cheap electricity from wind turbines to turn carbon dioxide waste into electrofuels or e-fuels. If their efforts succeed, they could enable ethanol plants to reduce emissions while producing millions more gallons of fuel every year. According to NREL scientist Michael Resch, “there is enough space in US corn fields to install wind turbines to convert all CO₂ from ethanol production into fuel.”⁷⁹

◆ For discussion

- How much do we know about wind power and its potential uses at our institution? How might we explore this further?
- What efforts are under way at our institution to use renewable energy sources in general?
- In what areas are faculty and/or students involved in researching and studying renewable energy? How might we highlight their efforts?

77 Bryce Anderson, “May Weather Challenges Record Corn Yield Prospect,” *Progressive Farmer*, June 12, 2023, www.dtnpf.com/agriculture/web/ag/news/article/2023/06/12/may-weather-challenges-record-corn.

78 “Wind explained: Where wind power is harnessed,” U.S. Energy Information Administration, April 20, 2023, <https://www.eia.gov/energyexplained/wind/where-wind-power-is-harnessed.php>.

79 Erik Ringle, “New Consortium Advances Technologies That Use Renewable Electricity To Turn Carbon Dioxide Into Fuel,” National Renewable Energy Laboratory, March 30, 2023, www.nrel.gov/news/program/2023/new-consortium-advances-technologies-that-use-renewable-energy-to-turn-carbon-dioxide-into-fuel.html.

Weighing in on Water

Approximately two billion people worldwide do not have access to clean and safe drinking water, and 46 percent of the world’s population lacks adequate sanitation services.⁸⁰ Addressing the availability and cleanliness of water is among the United Nations’ top priorities. Five years ago, the UN declared 2018–2028 as the International Decade for Action on Water for Sustainable Development. “The objectives of the Decade focus on the sustainable development and integrated management of water resources for the achievement of social, economic, and environmental objectives . . . as well as on the furtherance of cooperation and partnership at all levels in order to help to achieve internationally agreed water-related goals and targets.”⁸¹ There’s progress on the goal-setting front as considerably more data have become available about water-related ecosystems. According to a recent report released by the UN Environment Programme, 59 percent of environment-related indicators for previously established sustainable development goals (SDG) now have sufficient data to analyze progress, up from 34 percent in 2018. Global data availability and analysis are critical as one UN official said, “countries must increase investment in data availability, so decisions are not taken in the dark and policymaking is not left to chance.”⁸²

◆ For discussion

- What mechanisms are in place for monitoring water availability and usage at our institution? What kinds of data and metrics do we have available?
- In what ways are our institution’s faculty researchers contributing to efforts to address water scarcity?
- How might we engage in water conservation efforts locally and/or nationally?

80 Seyma Bayram, “Billions of people lack access to clean drinking water, U.N. report finds,” NPR.org, March 22, 2023, www.npr.org/2023/03/22/1165464857/billions-of-people-lack-access-to-clean-drinking-water-u-n-report-finds.

81 “International Decade for Action on Water for Sustainable Development, 2018–2028,” United Nations, Accessed June 23, 2023, www.un.org/en/events/waterdecade.

82 “Available data on water-related ecosystems doubles, improving countries’ ability to track SDGs,” United Nations Environment Programme, Accessed July 28, 2023, www.unep.org/news-and-stories/press-release/available-data-water-related-ecosystems-doubles-improving-countries.

Does Your Product Have Its Passport?

According to the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, “businesses and consumers alike are increasingly looking to make sustainable purchase choices.”⁸³ The European Union is leading an initiative that aims to put detailed information about the sustainability of products at consumers’ fingertips as early as 2026. The EU has proposed implementing digital product passports (DPPs), which would “collect the necessary data on a product and its supply chain to allow everyone involved in its production, distribution, and use to understand the products they consume and their impact. This new tool will be pivotal in supply chain management, as it will contain all the information that consumers, manufacturers, and auditors may need to evaluate the product’s sustainability.”⁸⁴ To obtain this information, “all a consumer needs to do is scan the product QR code with their phone to access DPP information.” By 2026, the EU expects to implement DPPs across three industries: apparel, batteries, and consumer electronics, with more to follow by 2030. As one analyst noted, “through data transparency and accessibility, the product passport initiative seeks to raise awareness and encourage environmentally friendly action across all parties involved in a product’s lifecycle: manufacturers, distributors, and end consumers.”⁸⁵

◆ For discussion

- How are we evaluating and monitoring the sustainability of the products we purchase for our institution? Do we consider the product’s lifecycle sustainability?
- In what ways are we using, or could we use, technology to facilitate our sustainability efforts?
- What policies and practices would we need to adopt to use lifecycle sustainability as an important consideration during purchasing decisions?

83 The EU Digital Product Passport: how can companies prepare for it today?” World Business Council for Sustainable Development, January 24, 2023, www.wbcasd.org/Overview/News-Insights/WBCSD-insights/EU-Digital-Product-Passport.

84 Edward Routh, “How the Product Passport is Set to Change the Supply Chain Industry,” *Supply & Demand Chain Executive*, January 11, 2023, www.sdexec.com/sustainability/article/22618100/relloe-how-the-product-passport-is-set-to-change-the-supply-chain-industry.

85 Elena Rotzokou, “Digital product passports: Europe takes the lead in sustainable growth,” *Circular*, March 20, 2023, www.circularonline.co.uk/opinions/digital-product-passports-europe-takes-the-lead-in-sustainable-growth.



Where Have All the Riders Gone?

As many areas of Americans' lives get back to normal after the pandemic, the future of public transportation ridership seems uncertain. "The COVID-19 pandemic had an unprecedented effect on public transportation ridership. Public transportation ridership nationwide in 2020 and 2021 was less than half of what it was before the pandemic—about 4.7 billion and 4.9 billion trips, respectively, compared with about 10.0 billion trips in 2019. Ridership in mid-2022 was about 62 percent of what it had been pre-pandemic.



The decline in ridership resulted from stay-at-home orders, workplace closures, and greater telecommuting as well as the curtailment of countless other economic and social activities." Recent research suggests that changes in commuting behavior may be permanent. According to one study, approximately 20 percent of full workdays will be done from home post-pandemic, compared with 5 percent pre-pandemic.⁸⁶ Still, local transit agencies hope more riders will return. Pandemic-driven behavior changes notwithstanding, one researcher suggests that "to bring back riders, transit agencies must understand why [they] left in the first place."⁸⁷

◆ For discussion

- What trends have we observed in ridership of any public transportation provided by our institution?
- What metrics have we traditionally used to measure and evaluate the success of our public transportation services?
- How are we gathering and reviewing feedback from riders? In what ways has rider feedback influenced how we offer public transportation at our institution?

86 William J. Mallett, "Public Transportation Ridership: Implications of Recent Trends for Federal Policy," Congressional Research Service, November 10, 2022, <http://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R47302>.

87 Christopher Wolf, "Want to Reverse Negative Ridership Trends? Ask the Riders What They Want," *Georgetown Public Policy Review*, January 21, 2023, <http://gppreview.com/2023/01/21/want-to-reverse-negative-ridership-trends-ask-the-riders-what-they-want>.

It Isn't Easy Being Green

A recent survey found that while 94 percent of Americans support recycling and 74 percent believe it should be a top priority, only about 35 percent of people actually recycle. Why don't more Americans recycle regularly? The top reason they give is lack of convenient access. Another barrier is not understanding what can be recycled. "The survey found that a consistent recycling program could lessen the confusion and reduce waste. Varying standards, even within cities and counties, leave consumers to make their best guesses about what's best for the environment."⁸⁸

◆ For discussion

- What's the rate of recycling on our campuses? To what degree are we meeting any goals we set for recycling?
- How are we educating faculty, staff, and students about recycling?
- How convenient is it to recycle at our institution? How might we improve that convenience? How might we reduce our reliance on single-use products that need to be recycled?



88 Dave Thomas and Dustin Lattimer, "New survey discovers why most people don't recycle," *Nexstar Media Wire*, December 5, 2022, www.fourstateshomepage.com/news/national/new-survey-discovers-why-most-people-dont-recycle-2.



Food for Thought

Building Back While Taking Time Off

Today's travelers vacation with more in mind than their own rejuvenation. They hope to leave their destinations better than they found them and look to patronize venues that operate in the spirit of regeneration. For example, the Shinta Mani Foundation in Cambodia is operated by Shinta Mani Hotels and Resorts. Through the foundation's work, the hotel chain benefits "the communities, wildlife, and ecosystems of Cambodia through responsible tourism, contributing to the country's regeneration."⁸⁹

The basic premise behind regenerative travel or tourism is "making an area better or improving it, as opposed to just sustaining it, and ensuring the greatest positive impact is achieved as a collective—using the power of travel to transform lives, offer restorative and immersive experiences that give back to our planet and empower our people at the same time."⁹⁰

Consumer demand is likely driving the growth of regenerative tourism. In a recent survey, 96 percent of respondents said it was important that their travel dollars are making a positive impact in the places they visit.⁹¹ According to another survey, 79 percent of tourists are willing to spend more on businesses that support local communities.⁹²

As the importance of sustainable business practices continues to grow in the tourism sector, businesses are going beyond "traditional sustainability and adopt[ing] regenerative approaches, which seek not only to minimize negative impacts, but also to restore and revitalize destinations."⁹³



◆ For discussion

- How much do we know about regenerative tourism in the countries where our institution hosts study abroad programs? Or alternative spring break opportunities?
- What opportunities might we have to offer sustainable, community-driven experiences to travelers to our area?
- How might we partner or collaborate with other organizations to support regenerative tourism as a learning experience for our students, faculty, and/or staff?

89 Megha Sharma, "Is regenerative tourism the solution to futureproofing the global travel industry?" *CEO Magazine*, March 31, 2023, www.theceomagazine.com/lifestyle/travel-leisure/regenerative-tourism.

90 Rebecca Cox, "What Is Regenerative Tourism?" *Country & Town House*, February 2, 2023, www.countryandtownhouse.com/travel/what-is-regenerative-tourism.

91 "2022 Impact Tourism Report," *Kind Traveler*, March 15, 2022, www.kindtraveler.com/content/2022-kind-traveler-global-impact-tourism-report.

92 Luciana D., "Investing in Sustainability: The Path to Regenerative Tourism," May 18, 2023, www.linkedin.com/pulse/investing-sustainability-path-regenerative-tourism-luciana/?utm_source=rss&utm_campaign=articles_sitemaps.

93 Ibid.

Political Trends

In This Section:

- Policing mobility
- Saving on swiping
- Legislating lending
- Cracking down on crypto
- Battling the ban on books
- Understanding transgender athletes, competitive sports, and the law
- Raising minimum wage
- Sidebar: Suing social media

Moving Violations

In a recent study, researchers examined roadway rules in 50 states and found evidence of policies being enforced in a racially discriminatory manner, or that have strong potential to be enforced in a racially discriminatory manner, specifically against Black residents who walk and bike. For example, 82 percent of US states prohibit walking on highways or freeways, even in communities so divided by roads that pedestrians have little choice—"a situation that's all too common in historically Black communities." Additionally, 64 percent have laws that prohibit the operation of bikes on sidewalks, even when the roads that run alongside them lack bike lanes and have a steady stream of traffic—"road features, which once again, are disproportionately common in Black neighborhoods." Researchers concluded that "many of these laws are . . . outdated, and they simply don't achieve what they're intended to achieve, which is the health, safety, and welfare of people on our streets. Instead, unfortunately, they're leading to more discrimination, more harm, more violence against people of color."⁹⁴ Among their recommendations for remedying the situation are repealing laws, decriminalizing violations, and promoting alternative enforcement.⁹⁵



◆ For discussion

- What do we know about local laws governing pedestrians and bicycle riders and their impact on our institution? In our community? How could we partner with municipalities to address inequities Black pedestrians and bicyclists face (for example, addressing the road features in disproportionately Black neighborhoods that make bicycling dangerous)?
- How might we educate our faculty, students, and staff to increase their awareness of these laws or other policies?
- How could we engage with local law enforcement to better understand any interaction they are having with our stakeholders around this issue?

⁹⁴ Kea Wilson, "Study: Bike/walk policies that restrict Black Americans' mobility," *Greater Greater Washington*, March 29, 2023, <http://ggwash.org/view/89068/study-bike-walk-policies-that-restrict-black-americans-mobility>.

⁹⁵ Charles T. Brown, *Arrested Mobility: Barriers to Walking, Biking, and E-Scooter Use in Black Communities in the United States*, Equitable Cities, March 2023, <http://arrestedmobility.com/report>.



Swiping Up Cash

While consumers may be unaware of the swipe fees merchants add to their credit card purchases, they can add up. One estimate says swipe fees increased prices for Americans by at least \$900 in 2021.⁹⁶ According to the National Retail Federation, swipe fees average about 2 percent of the transaction amount but can be as much as 4 percent for some premium rewards credit cards.⁹⁷

Legislators say it's time for major credit card issuers to be more competitive and let go of the monopoly they have on setting such transaction processing fees. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) has introduced the Credit Card Competition Act of 2023, which would require credit card companies to offer at least two networks for transaction processing. "The bill says we're going to break the monopolies that Visa and MasterCard have," Durbin said. "They control 83 percent of the credit card markets, and they decide how much the retailers are going to add to your bill."⁹⁸

◆ For discussion

- How much do we know about how swipe fees impact the cost of purchases at our institution?
- What are our existing policies that provide guidelines for credit card transactions?
- How can we educate faculty, staff, and students about swipe fees as a part of our overall financial literacy efforts?



96 Kristina Partsinevelos and Cait Freda, "How small businesses are fighting inflated credit card swipe fees," CNBC.com, February 9, 2023, www.cnbc.com/2023/02/09/small-businesses-credit-card-swipe-fees.html.

97 "Swipe Fees," National Retail Federation, Accessed August 2, 2023, <http://nrf.com/advocacy/policy-issues/swipe-fees>.

98 Shabnam Danesh, "Durbin introduces legislation targeting credit card swipe fees," CIProud.com, June 7, 2023, www.centralillinoisproud.com/news/politics/durbin-introduces-legislation-targeting-credit-card-swipe-fees.



Locking Down Predatory Lending

Colorado Governor Jared Polis recently signed a law designed to protect his constituents from predatory lending. The law will prevent online and out-of-state lenders from making high-cost loans to Coloradans. Online lenders reportedly seek to charge annual rates of 30 to 36 percent for loans as large as \$10,000 to \$30,000, which are often debt consolidation loans targeted to borrowers already overburdened with debt. Specifically, the goal of the law is to put an end to predatory lending schemes that utilize a provision of the Depository Institutions Deregulation and Monetary Control Act (DIDMCA), a 1980 federal law permitting banks to export interest rates from their home state to states with stricter lending laws. "DIDMCA gives states the right to opt-out of this provision, and the new Colorado law asserts that right."⁹⁹ Colorado is the first state in decades to opt out. "Shortly after DIDMCA was passed in 1980, about a dozen states opted out, but over the years, all but Iowa and Puerto Rico opted back in."¹⁰⁰

◆ For discussion

- How much predatory lending takes place in our state? What impact might it be having on faculty, students, and staff?
- What could we do to facilitate discussion about loans and overall financial management?
- What criteria are we using to evaluate our relationships with financial institutions?

99 "Colorado Governor Signs Leading-Edge Law Preventing Evasion of State Usury Caps," *Red Lake Nation News*, June 7, 2023, www.redlakenationnews.com/story/2023/06/07/business/colorado-governor-signs-leading-edge-law-preventing-evasion-of-state-usury-caps/114520.html.

100 "New Colorado Law a Model for Stopping Predatory Rent-a-Bank Lending," National Consumer Law Center, June 6, 2023, www.nclc.org/new-colorado-law-a-model-for-stopping-predatory-rent-a-bank-lending.

Corralling Crypto

Thus far, crypto exchanges have operated in the United States without the oversight of a regulatory body. The US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) aims to change that sooner rather than later. In what financial analysts view as a crackdown on the industry, the SEC has filed lawsuits against two major crypto exchanges, Coinbase and Binance. According to one legal analyst, “the two cases are different, but overlap and point in the same direction: the SEC’s increasingly aggressive campaign to bring cryptocurrencies under the jurisdiction of the federal securities laws.”



A Deeper Dive In its most recent complaint, the SEC alleged that Coinbase has since at least 2019 “made billions of dollars by operating as a middleman on crypto transactions, while evading disclosure requirements meant to protect investors.” Securities are strictly regulated and require detailed disclosures to inform investors of potential risks. Crypto companies refute that tokens meet the definition of a security, argue the SEC’s rules are ambiguous, and assert that the SEC is overstepping its authority with attempts to regulate them.¹⁰¹ SEC Chair Gary Gensler has long held the view that tokens constitute securities and should be regulated: “The investing public has the benefit of US securities laws. Crypto should be no different, and these platforms, these intermediaries need to come into compliance.”¹⁰²



◆ For discussion

- What are the realistic use cases for cryptocurrency at our institution?
- How much do we know about the degree to which our investment portfolio includes investments in blockchain and crypto/digital assets?
- How many of our students, faculty, and staff are trading or mining crypto? What kind of risk does that activity expose our institution to?

101 Jonathan Stempel, Hannah Lang, and John McCrank, “US tightens crackdown on crypto with lawsuits against Coinbase, Binance,” Reuters.com, June 7, 2023, www.reuters.com/legal/us-sec-sues-coinbase-over-failure-register-2023-06-06.

102 Jeff Cox, “SEC Chair Gensler doubts the need for more digital currency,” CNBC.com, June 6, 2023, www.cnbc.com/2023/06/06/sec-chair-gensler-doubts-the-need-for-more-digital-currency.html.

A (Book) Banner Year

What do *The Handmaid’s Tale*, *The Bluest Eye*, and *Milk and Honey* all have in common?

According to Pen America, they are among the most banned

books in the first half of the 2022–2023 school year. Book bans and requests to ban books are on the rise in the United States.¹⁰³ Last year, the American Library Association (ALA) received 1,269 book challenges or demands to censor library books and resources. More than 2,500 unique titles were targeted for censorship, a 38 percent increase over last year. Most of these titles were written by or about members of the LGBTQIA+ community and people of color. Of the reported book challenges, 58 percent targeted books and materials in school libraries, classroom libraries, or school curricula. Where is this increase coming from? According to Deborah Caldwell-Stone, director of ALA’s Office for Intellectual Freedom, “Overwhelmingly, we’re seeing these challenges come from organized censorship groups that target local library board meetings to demand removal of a long list of books they share on social media.”¹⁰⁴



◆ For discussion

- How much do we know about requests to ban books at schools and libraries in our community? Has our institution received any such requests? If so, how are we tracking them?
- What state book banning legislation recently passed or proposed might impact our institution? In what ways? How are we monitoring or tracking this legislation?
- According to ALA President Lessa Kanani’opua Pelayo-Lozada, some library workers have faced threats to their personal safety by those seeking to ban books. How can we ensure those who work at and use our library are safe?

103 Kasey Meehan and Jonathan Friedman, “Banned in the USA: State Laws Supercharge Book Suppression in Schools,” PEN American, April 20, 2023, <http://pen.org/report/banned-in-the-usa-state-laws-supercharge-book-suppression-in-schools>.

104 “American Library Association reports record number of demands to censor library books and materials in 2022,” American Library Association, March 22, 2023, www.ala.org/news/press-releases/2023/03/record-book-bans-2022.

Transgender Athletes and Competitive Sports

A recent survey found that 69 percent of Americans say transgender athletes should only be allowed to compete on sports teams that conform with their birth gender. Only 26 percent endorse transgender athletes being able to play on teams that match their current gender identity. This opposition has increased about 7 percent since the last time these questions were asked in 2021.¹⁰⁵ Recent legislative action, part of a nation-wide effort by conservatives to restrict transgender rights, has also been passed at both the state and federal levels. In April, the US House of Representatives passed the Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act of 2023, which “generally prohibits school athletic programs from allowing individuals whose biological sex at birth was male to participate in programs that are for women or girls.”¹⁰⁶ Political observers say “the bill has no chance of passing the Democratic-controlled Senate or being signed by President Biden.”¹⁰⁷ Several state legislatures have taken up this issue as well, with North Carolina among the most recent to pass a bill that “would ban transgender girls and women from competing on middle school, high school, and college sports teams that align with their gender identity.”¹⁰⁸ If the bill becomes a law, North Carolina will join 22 other states that have laws banning transgender students from participating in sports consistent with their gender identity.¹⁰⁹



◆ For discussion

- What are our policies for determining whether a student can participate in sports based on gender identity? How do we determine those policies?
- Have we considered developing a Gender Identity Policy?¹¹⁰ How much do we know about whether our peer institutions have adopted such policies?
- Given the recent spate of legislation against transgender rights—not to mention, violence against transgender people¹¹¹—how can we support our transgender students, faculty, and staff right now?

105 Jeffrey M. Jones, “More Say Birth Gender Should Dictate Sports Participation,” Gallup.com, June 12, 2023, <http://news.gallup.com/poll/507023/say-birth-gender-dictate-sports-participation.aspx>.

106 “H.R.734 - Protection of Women and Girls in Sports Act of 2023,” Congress.gov, Accessed August 3, 2023, www.congress.gov/bills/118th-congress/house-bill/734.

107 Annie Karni, “House Passes Bill to Bar Transgender Athletes From Female Sports Teams,” *The New York Times*, April 20, 2023, www.nytimes.com/2023/04/20/us/politics/transgender-athlete-ban-bill.html.

108 Dianne Gallagher and Kaanita Iyer, “North Carolina legislature passes ban on transgender athletes from girls’ sports teams,” CNN.com, www.cnn.com/2023/06/22/politics/north-carolina-anti-transgender-sports-bill/index.html.

109 Movement Advancement Project, “Equality Maps: Bans on Transgender Youth Participation in Sports,” Accessed August 3, 2023, www.mapresearch.org/equality-maps/youth/sports_participation_bans.

110 Here’s an example from Willamette University, which implemented a Transgender Athletic Inclusion Policy, <https://www.wubearcats.com/information/transgender/policy>, and another from Post University, which instituted a Gender Identity Policy, <https://post.edu/student-services/student-affairs/gender-identity-policy>.

111 Maria Cramer and Wesley Parnell, “Man Fatally Stabbed in Confrontation as He Danced at a Gas Station,” *The New York Times*, July 31, 2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/07/31/nyregion/stabbing-gas-station-brooklyn.html>.

A Minimum Wage That’s A Living Wage

According to a new study, 65 percent of people surveyed would favor raising the federal minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$15 an hour over five years, including 90 percent of Democrats and 41 percent of Republicans. Thirty states have already increased their minimum wage above the federal minimum.¹¹² Based on a recent survey, most Americans support such increases as they correspond to their beliefs about “what an average worker would need to earn to have a decent quality of life—that is, to afford basic necessities and other essential bills without struggling.” Researchers found that, on average, voters believe that a typical American needs to earn \$26 an hour to have a decent quality of life.¹¹³

◆ For discussion

- How do the rates we pay hourly employees at our institution compare with the federal minimum wage as well as hourly wages paid by local businesses?
- What role might we play in facilitating discussion about the potential impact raising the federal minimum wage may have on the community?
- What kinds of data have we collected and maintained about wages at our institution? How might analysis of those data influence our current policies (e.g., minimum wage vs. living wage)?



112 Stetson Miller, “Study Finds that 2/3 of Americans Support Raising the Federal Minimum Wage,” Gray Television Washington News Bureau, April 21, 2023, www.graydc.com/2023/04/21/study-finds-that-23-americans-support-raising-federal-minimum-wage.

113 Lew Blank, “\$7.25 Isn’t Cutting It in This Economy. Voters Support Raising the Minimum Wage to \$20 per Hour,” Data for Progress, May 24, 2023, www.dataforprogress.org/blog/2023/5/24/725-isnt-cutting-it-in-this-economy-voters-support-raising-the-minimum-wage-to-20-per-hour.



Food for Thought

Social Media's No Friend of Theirs

Social media and its use by young people has been a concern almost since its inception. So much so that in May, US Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy released a new advisory, "Social Media and Youth Mental Health." According to Murthy, the most common question parents ask him is whether social media is safe for their kids. His response: "The answer is that we don't have enough evidence to say it's safe, and in fact, there is growing evidence that social media use is associated with harm to young people's mental health."

"Children are exposed to harmful content on social media, ranging from violent and sexual content, to bullying and harassment. And for too many children, social media use is compromising their sleep and valuable in-person time with family and friends," he continued. "We are in the middle of a national youth mental health crisis, and I am concerned that social media is an important driver of that crisis—one that we must urgently address."¹¹⁴

The advisory was issued amidst a flurry of legal activity. Both school districts and parents have filed lawsuits seeking to hold social media companies accountable for its harmful effects on youth.

Public school districts in Washington, California, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Florida are suing social media companies. "School districts are generally seeking that the conduct of social media companies be declared a public nuisance, that their practices change, and that damages be paid to fund prevention, education, and treatment for excessive and problematic use of social media."¹¹⁵



114 "Surgeon General Issues New Advisory About Effects Social Media Use Has on Youth Mental Health," U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, May 23, 2023, www.hhs.gov/about/news/2023/05/23/surgeon-general-issues-new-advisory-about-effects-social-media-use-has-youth-mental-health.html.

115 Donna St. George, "Schools sue social media companies over youth mental health crisis," *The Washington Post*, March 19, 2023, www.washingtonpost.com/education/2023/03/19/school-lawsuits-social-media-mental-health/.

The 2,000+ families that have filed suit through the Social Media Victims Law Center seek similar redress. "More than 350 lawsuits are expected to move forward this year against TikTok, Snapchat, YouTube, Roblox, and Meta, the parent company to Instagram and Facebook." One family is suing Meta, alleging that Instagram led their daughter into depression and an eating disorder at age 12. Another alleges that a video shared on Instagram led to their daughter's suicide.¹¹⁶

Aside from monetary damages, school districts, parents, and youth mental health advocates want companies to make social media safer by implementing age and identity verification, turning off algorithms, and providing parental warnings. "Number one is age and identity verification . . . there's technology to make sure that the people are who they say they are. Number two would be turn off the algorithms . . . there's no reason why [a girl], who was interested in exercise, should have been directed toward anorexic content. Number three would be warnings so that parents know what's going on. Let's be realistic, you're never [going to] have social media platforms be 100 percent safe. But, these changes would make them safer."¹¹⁷

◆ For discussion

- How much do we know about social media use at our institution? What could we do to solicit input from students about how social media impacts their lives?
- What is the relationship between the use of our institution's mental health services and social media? Do we know how many students, faculty, or staff using those services have cited social media as a contributing factor?
- What might we be able to contribute to ongoing discussions about social media and youth mental health? Is there an opportunity to partner with public schools in our community?

116 Sharyn Alfonsi, "More than 2,000 families suing social media companies over kids' mental health," CBSNews.com, June 4, 2023, www.cbsnews.com/news/social-media-lawsuit-meta-tiktok-facebook-instagram-60-minutes-transcript-2023-06-04/.

117 Ibid.

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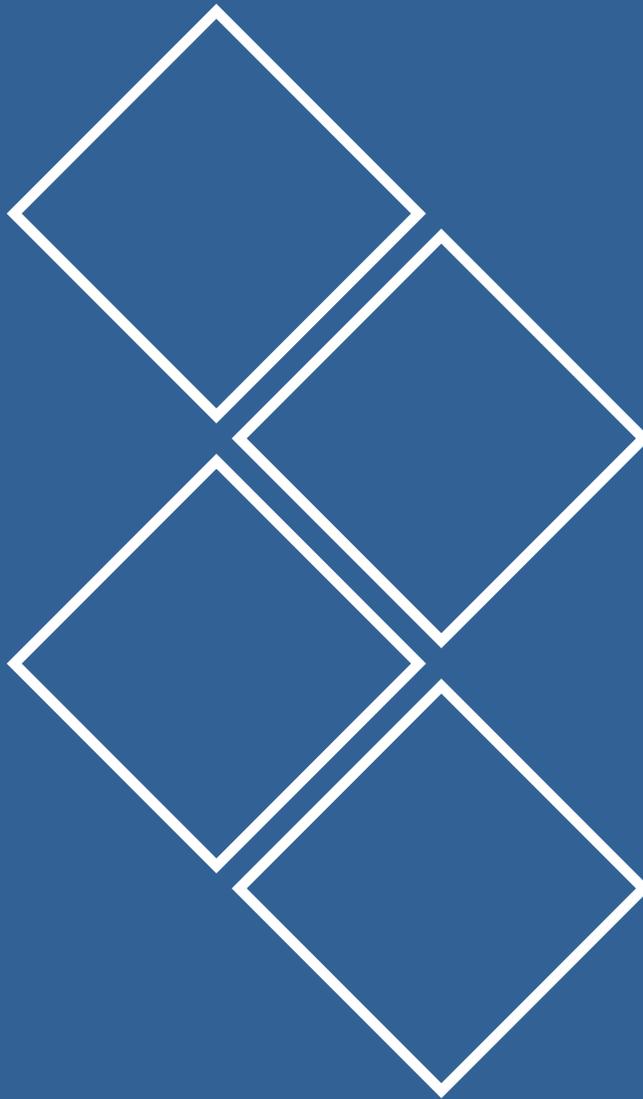
About the Author

A graduate of the College of William & Mary and Howard University, Apryl Motley, CAE, SASM, is a CRLA-certified master tutor at Howard Community College where she assists students with their writing. Additionally, she was an associate faculty member at the University of Phoenix Online for 15 years. Motley covered higher education business issues for NACUBO's *Business Officer Magazine* for close to a decade. She is a member of the National Tutoring Association, Women in Film & Video, and the American Society of Business Publication Editors.

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