

# Preventing and Supporting Faculty Recovering from Burnout: A Guide for Chairs and Deans



## Understanding and Identifying Burnout

Burnout: prolonged, chronic workplace stress, resulting in symptoms in three dimensions:

- Emotional, mental, and/or physical exhaustion
- Feelings of cynicism and/or detachment
- Feelings of ineffectiveness/inefficiency and lack of accomplishment

Source: World Health Organization, 2020

## Strategies

- ✓ Normalize discussing burnout, stress, overwhelm, and well-being
- ✓ Regularly share resources to support faculty well-being and prevent burnout
- ✓ Recognize and publicly praise faculty contributions, which helps support a sense of connection community and accomplishment
- ✓ Recognize that faculty of color, women+ faculty, and LGBTQIA faculty perform disproportionate amounts of service and mentoring and be mindful of these inequities in assigning teaching and service
- ✓ Be proactive in reducing workloads when possible, recognizing that not every task is equally urgent
- ✓ Be strategic about reducing meeting overload, communicating via email rather than meetings when appropriate
- ✓ Consider which committee(s) can be sunsetted when creating a new committee or service request
- ✓ Reach out individually to faculty members to check in
- ✓ Arrange regular opportunities for faculty in your department to socialize and be in community
- ✓ Encourage and model taking breaks and setting healthy boundaries around work hours

## Services and Resources

The [Office of Faculty Professional Development](#) offers **1:1 faculty consultations** to support faculty experiencing stress, overwhelm, and burnout, a **monthly support group** for women+ faculty experiencing burnout, and **workshops** to support faculty development and well-being.

The [Employee Assistance Program](#) provides no-charge counseling, resources to support work/life balance, and support for navigating stressful workplace incidents.

[Health Initiatives](#) offers workshops and events to support the well-being of the Tech community.

## Additional Reading

*Burned Out and Overburdened: How to Support the Faculty* (Chronicle of Special Report, 2021).

O'Grady, K. 2021. "[Managing Through Emotional Exhaustion.](#)" *The Chronicle*.

Nagoski, E. and Nagoski, A. 2020. *Burnout: The Secret to Unlocking the Stress Cycle*.

Jiménez, J. 2021. *The Burnout Fix*.

Fowler, A. 2020. "[A Time for Boundaries.](#)" *Inside Higher Ed*.

Pope-Ruark, R. 2020. "[Beating Burnout.](#)" *Inside Higher Ed*.

Flaherty, C. 2020. "[Burning Out.](#)" *Inside Higher Ed*.