Supporting Graduate Students and Postdocs Experiencing Burnout: Strategies and Resources for Faculty

**Services and Resources**

The [Center for Assessment, Referral and Education (CARE)](https://www.care.gatech.edu) provides counseling and support to graduate students.

The [Employee Assistance Program](https://www.ajc.com) provides counseling and support for postdocs, faculty, and staff.

[Health Initiatives](https://www.healthinitiatives.gatech.edu) offers workshops and events to support the well-being of the Tech community.

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**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 stress and burnout
- To the extent possible, provide flexibility in scheduling
- Provide opportunities for community and socialization, which helps protect against burnout
- Model setting healthy boundaries around work hours
- Model taking regular breaks—during the workday and throughout the semester
- Conduct a lab/research group climate survey to understand the issues members of your group are facing
- Encourage grad students and postdocs to use resources, support, and services
- Teach and model how to prioritize tasks
- Encourage and support taking time away from work
- Check in about available time and bandwidth before setting deadlines and assigning work
- Encourage grad students and postdocs to pursue the work, research, and opportunities they find most meaningful and fulfilling, which helps prevent burnout
- Recognize that students and postdocs of color, women+ students and postdocs, disabled students and postdocs, international students and postdocs, and LGBTQIA students and postdocs often face additional stresses that contribute to burnout

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**Additional Reading**


