



EAB

Faculty Burnout – A Workplace Problem, Not a Worker Problem

Building an Anti-Burnout Workplace Culture in Academic Affairs Part 1

Update Your Name/Video and Mute

Update your name and add your institution

The screenshot shows a Zoom meeting window. The main display area shows a presentation slide with the EAB logo and the text 'EAB Virtual Meetings 2020'. On the right side, there is a 'Participants' panel titled 'Participants (2)'. It lists 'Test Participant (Me)' and 'Meeting Host (Host)'. The 'Test Participant (Me)' entry has 'Mute' and 'Rename' buttons next to it. A yellow box highlights the 'Participants' button in the bottom toolbar. A callout box points to the 'Rename' button in the participants list, and another callout box points to the 'Rename' dialog box that is open. The dialog box has a title bar 'Rename' and a text input field with the text 'Jane Doe - Institution'. The bottom toolbar includes buttons for Mute, Stop Video, Invite, Participants, Share, Chat, Record, and Leave Meeting.

Open Participants menu

Joining Us Today...

Research Team and Presenters:



Liz Rothenberg,
PhD
Managing Director



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PhD
Managing Director



Melanie
Overton, Ed.D
Director



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Brown
Associate Director



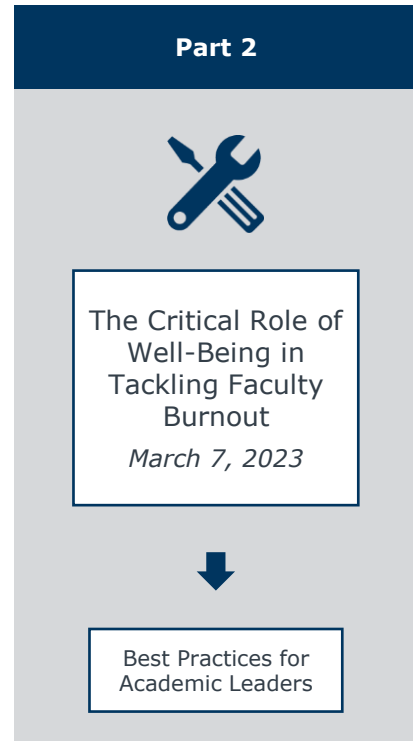
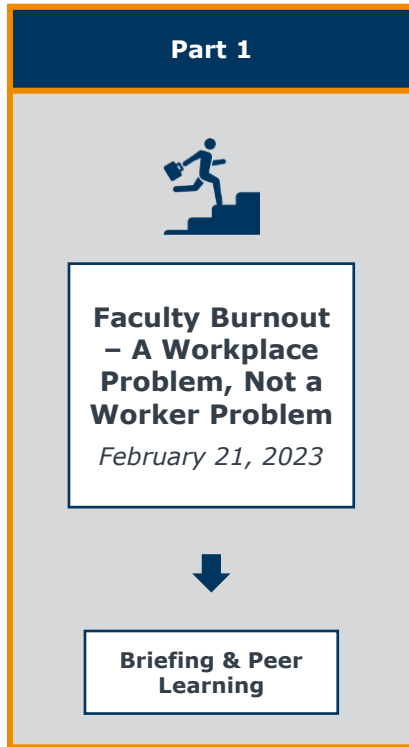
Katie
Herrmann
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Analyst

A Two-Part Workshop Series for Academic Leaders

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Pandemic Impact Continues to Reverberate

Faculty Burnout Looms Large at Colleges and Universities

Pandemic Leaves Faculty Disengaged and Emotionally Drained



The Great Faculty Disengagement



Turnover, Burnout, and Demoralization in Higher Ed

Faculty who felt...

2019

2020

32% Stressed

69% Stressed

12% Angry

32% Angry

32% Fatigued

68% Fatigued



Faculty Well-Being Pain Points Boiling Over, Further Exacerbating Burnout

Broken trust between administration & faculty

Inflexible work policies

Unsustainable workloads

Physical safety concerns

Caregiving responsibilities

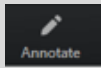
Discrimination & harassment

Annotate this slide!



Which of the terms below do you associate most with 'burnout'?

How to Annotate Using a Stamp:



Click "annotate" on the zoom toolbar (it may also be under "view options")



On the annotation toolbar **click stamp**, select a shape.

Now, click anywhere on the slide to place a stamp there.



Press the **red "X"** in the left-hand corner of the toolbar to stop annotating

Burnout

Also Referred To As:

Exhaustion

Engagement

Fatigue

Productivity

Trauma

Work-Life Balance

Disengaged

Quiet Quitting

Morale

Change Fatigue

What Is Burnout?



Maslach's Definition of Burnout

"Burnout is a prolonged response to chronic emotional and interpersonal stressors on the job, and is defined by three dimensions of exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficacy."

The Three Dimensions of Burnout:

- 1 **Exhaustion** of one's emotional or physical resources
- 2 **Cynicism** or an excessively detached response to various aspects of the job
- 3 **Inefficacy** or feelings of incompetence or lack of achievement at work

Burn-out refers specifically to phenomena in the occupational context and should not be applied to describe experiences in other areas of life.



"A Workplace Problem, Not a Worker Problem"

Burnout is...

“...systemic, a product of workplace cultures that **value productivity above all else**”

“...a **product of higher ed**, a culture where productivity infuses everything we do, and where the longest CV wins”

“...feeling ashamed for needing help because **work environments don't support slowing down**”

“...when **productivity becomes toxic**”

Maslach's Six Drivers of Burnout

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Workload



Control



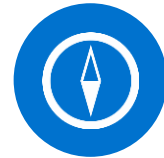
Reward



Community



Fairness



Values

Burnout Driver #1: Workload

Characteristics

- Excessive overload
- Mismatch between work and skills
- Work that requires people to display emotions inconsistent with their feelings

“The **increased workload** and anxiety is something I don't think non-teachers can quite grasp...for me...to **teach effectively and thoughtfully requires about twice the time**, and there's a **constant sense you're never doing enough.**”

- University of Washington Professor

Rising Student Expectations Demand More of Faculty:

- ▶ **57%** workforce introductions and networking
- ▶ **45%** willingness to listen about personal issues

Examples of **workload** drivers in higher education:

- Mandate to adopt new approaches to teaching & assessment
- More administrative demands due to staff shortages
- Logistical barriers to research and scholarship that have made it difficult to stay on ideal career tracks
- Increase in caregiving responsibilities (childcare and eldercare)
- Growing student mental health challenges increasingly showing up in the classroom

Burnout Driver #2: Control

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Characteristics

- Insufficient control over the resources needed to do their work
- Insufficient authority to pursue the work in what they believe is the most effective manner



Shared Governance Was Eroding Before COVID-19. Now It's a Landslide



As More College Presidents Quit, Search Firms Prosper



"...the fact that many of the presidents that probably planned to serve a few more years have **reached a point where they're deciding to step down is very much a national trend.**

Executive Search Firm Leader

Examples of **control** drivers in higher education:

- Leadership churn
- New policies imposed by federal, state, and local govt. as well as university leaders
- Perceived threats to shared governance
- Dramatic rise in student requests for learning accommodations
- Pressures to change teaching methods to fit student preferences rather than faculty expertise

Burnout Driver #3: Reward

Characteristics

- Lack of sufficient intrinsic, social, or financial rewards



Public Opinion on Value of Higher Ed Remains Mixed



'Higher Ed Is a Scam of a Career': Readers Speak Out on Dead-End Jobs



Faculty Matter: So Why Doesn't Everyone Think So?



Student Disengagement Has Soared Since the Pandemic

Examples of **reward** drivers in higher education:

- Growing student disengagement erodes faculty's sense of meaning and accomplishment in teaching role
- Perception that trustees, voters, many politicians do not value faculty work
- Inability to see a promising career path
- Failure of compensation to keep pace with inflation
- Cuts to healthcare/retirement benefits
- Perception that faculty work is not appreciated by university leadership

Burnout Driver #4: Community

Characteristics

- Loss of sense of positive connection with others in the workplace
- Chronic and unresolved conflict with others on the job

Lingering Barriers to Community Due to COVID-19:

66% of faculty **spent less time at conferences/training** than pre-pandemic

*Faculty who agreed the pandemic **negatively affected** them in Spring 2022 with respect to:*

96% networking opportunities

90% fostering new research collaborations

Examples of **community** drivers in higher education:

- Impact of remote work on personal relationships
- Lack of informal networking opportunities with other faculty and colleagues outside the institution
- Frustrations and disagreements due to COVID and hybrid learning policies
- Inability to attend professional conferences and/or visit archives
- Less time to dedicate to formal and informal mentorship opportunities

Burnout Driver #5: Fairness

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Characteristics

- Lack of perceived fairness in the workplace

“

Faculty and staff members have **responded to coronavirus-related budget reductions, layoffs, furloughs, and pay cuts with demands for greater financial transparency**. Suddenly everyone is curious about how the money works...”

- *The Chronicle of Higher Education*

”

69%

of faculty senate chairs reported that **administration acted unilaterally on budget issues**

Examples of **fairness** drivers in higher education:

- Increasing evidence of workload and compensation inequity
- Greater budget pressure and transparency highlight funding differences
- Ad hoc decisions made by deans and chairs with little justification
- The pandemic had disparate impacts on different faculty groups – e.g., the pandemic disproportionately set back the research pursuits of faculty who needed access to a lab

Burnout Driver #6: Values

Characteristics

- People feel constrained by the job to do things that are not in accord with their own values
- Discrepancy between the lofty mission statement and actual practice



“There is some sense that there is the espoused values of our institutions and then the enacted values, and that there isn’t perfect alignment between those two...increasingly, folks are coming into higher education, and they want to see the receipts...what are the policies and practices and the actions that support this value that you have stated is ‘central to the mission of who you are as an institution’...institutions are falling short when it comes to really being able to provide evidence...what it has suggested to some folks is that there is a real values conflict.”

- Kevin McClure, Associate Professor, UNC Wilmington



Examples of **values** drivers in higher education:

- Growing belief that the broader culture is antithetical to traditional academic values
- Perception that the university acts more like a corporation than a mission-driven institution
- Over-reliance on educational mission as a benefit or justification for longer hours
- Public attacks on higher education from political leaders and pundits
- Legislation in conflict with personal values

UNM Gauges Enduring COVID-19 Impacts on Faculty

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The University of New Mexico Surveyed Full-Time Faculty in Spring 2022



Key Survey Logistics



Goal: Determine **impacts of COVID-19 on full-time faculty** at UNM



Team: Faculty and staff working to create **sustainable climate changes** for increased success of women and minority faculty



Timeline: Online responses collected April 30-May 18



Respondents: 343 Full-time UNM faculty in Spring 2022

Sample Questions:



Overall, to what extent has the COVID-19 pandemic negatively effected your Spring 2022 semester with regard to **satisfaction with work?**



After work, I **need more time than in the past to relax/feel better.**



Lately, I **think less at work and do my job almost mechanically.**



Compared to semesters prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, how much time did you spend on [**Childcare, Adult Caregiving**] in Spring 2022?



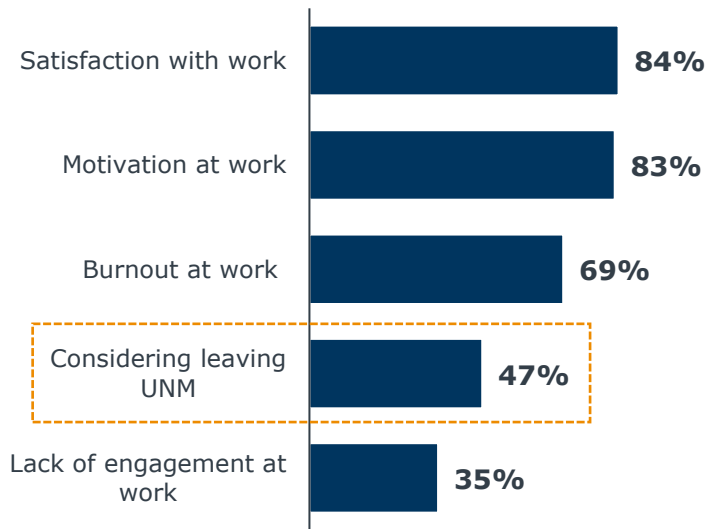
Further Reading:
EAB's Tackling the Growing Childcare Crisis Whitepaper

Struggling Beneath the Surface

UNM Faculty Share Their Biggest Pain Points

*The pandemic **negatively** affected my work in Spring 2022 with respect to...*

N = 343 University of New Mexico Faculty



Obscuring an Unsustainable Reality

“[T]o everyone around me, I **look like I am successful** and managing to balance work and life. I feel, on the other hand, **like crying most days and I think about leaving this university more and more often lately.**”

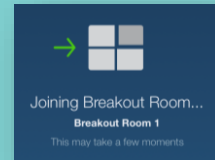
UNM Faculty Member

Moving to Peer Discussions...

Momentarily, we will move into breakout rooms

You will see a message that looks like this →

Prompting you to join a virtual room with an EABer and a handful of other attendees.



We will pause for a couple minutes upon entering the breakout room.

Please use this time to read the questions or enter your own questions for the group in the chat

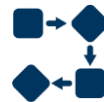
Each group will discuss:



**Experiences with
Faculty Burnout**



**Major Drivers of
Faculty Burnout**



**Trickle Down
Effects of Burnout**

Breakout Session



Introductions

Discussion Questions



How have you seen **faculty burnout manifest** on your campus (e.g., impacting the student experience)?



What do you think are the **main drivers of burnout for faculty** on your campus? **How have you gauged this?**



What **obstacles does faculty burnout create for your work as an academic leader** that makes this a top concern for you?



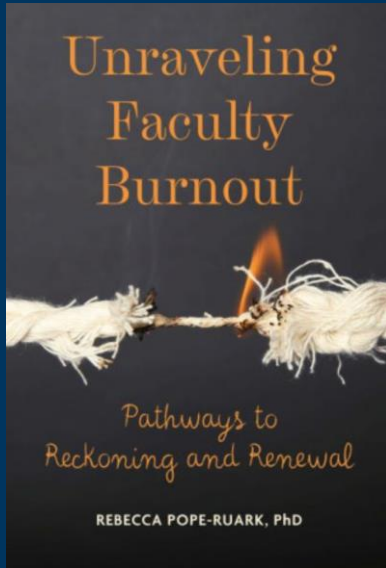
Please feel free to enter your own questions for the group in the chat!

We are currently in breakout rooms.

You can rejoin your session by clicking **Breakout Rooms** in your Zoom menu bar. If you have any questions or need assistance, please send a private chat to the Meeting Host.



Burnout Culture Endemic to Academic Affairs



“

A major step toward eliminating burnout from the culture of higher ed is acknowledging that only systemic cultural changes will make a significant difference. Most of the reporting on burnout offers suggestions targeting individuals rather than the culture that led to the problem. Because burnout is endemic to higher education...**individual interventions will not make a dent in the academic culture.”**

UNM Recommendations Hinge on Systemic Change

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Desired Improvements Do Not Focus on the Individual

- 
1. Resources to **support productivity in scholarship and creative works**
 2. **Training and rewards for mentoring** students and colleagues
 3. Communicate and adapt faculty **performance expectations and evaluation processes**
 4. Track changes that might impact childcare and explore additional options
 5. Design opportunities for informal **faculty interactions**
 6. **Make visible and evaluate programs that promote faculty well-being** and work-life balance
 7. **Raise awareness of resources** to assist with student academic needs and well-being
 8. Help faculty and staff navigate the application process for ADA accommodations

Tackling Burnout Requires Cultural Change

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Well-Being Initiatives That Encourage “Self-Help” Ignore Systemic Factors

Efforts to Support Well-Being Target the Individual

But Systemic Cultural Changes Are Necessary for Real Improvement



Yoga Classes



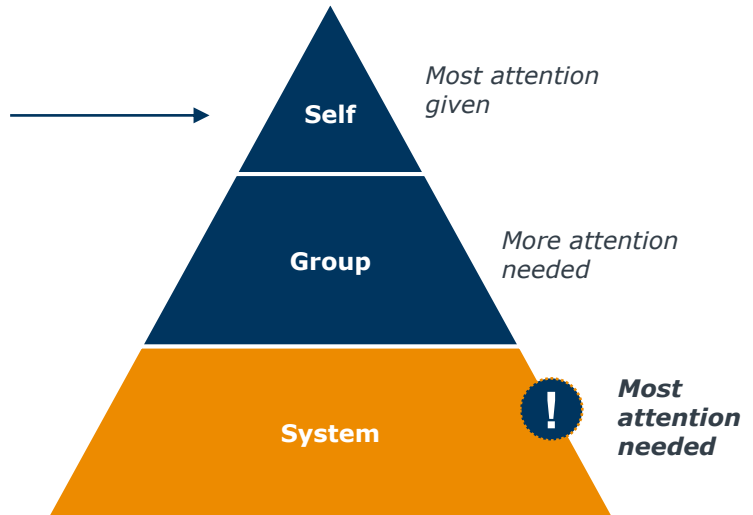
Time Management Trainings



Meditation Apps



Fitness Challenges



What Is Well-Being?

23

U.S. Surgeon General Releases New Framework for Workplace Well-Being



October 2022

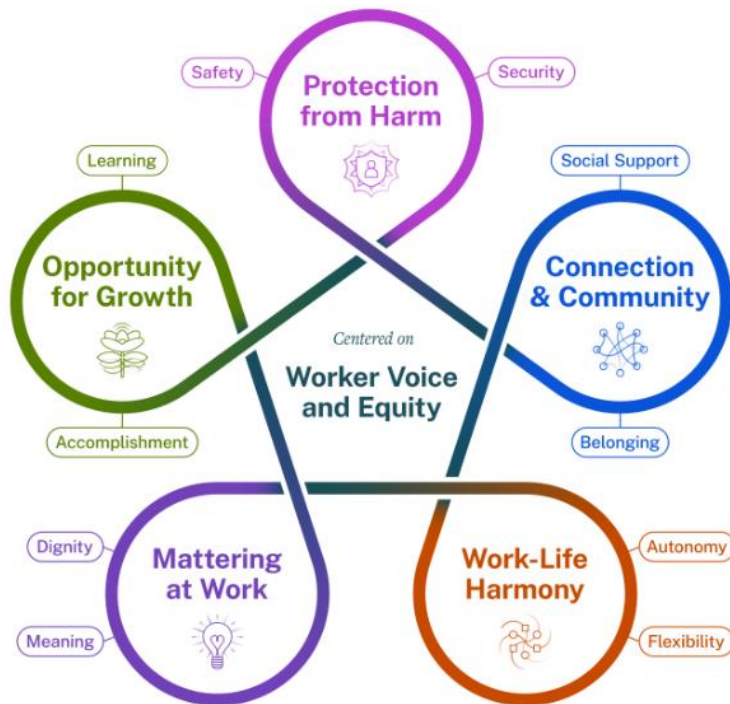
*U.S. Surgeon General
Releases New Framework
for Mental Health and Well-
Being in the Workplace*

— “ —

“As we recover from the worst of the pandemic, **we have an opportunity and the power to make workplaces engines for mental health and well-being**, and this Surgeon General’s Framework shows us how we can start.”

— Surgeon General
Dr. Vivek Murthy

— ” —



In a Few Moments...You Will See Two Poll Questions



Protection from Harm

Creating the conditions for physical and psychological safety and security



Connection & Community

Fostering positive social interactions and relationships that promote social support and belonging



Opportunity for Growth

Building opportunities for workers to accomplish goals based on their skills and growth to feel learning and accomplishment



Mattering at Work

Ensuring people feel that they and their work matter those around them to support dignity and meaning



Work-Life Harmony

Promoting the ability to integrate work and non-work demands with autonomy and flexibility



Faculty Want More Visible Support From University Leaders

Our big fear is that college leaders won't do anything. We get the sense that some leaders think that if we can just get on the "other side" of the pandemic, things will magically improve. Like we'll flip the switch back on and the faculty will reanimate. Going silent on this issue right now severely underestimates its magnitude.

The pandemic will eventually transition into something else, but its effects will linger. For how long and with what consequences depends on what college leaders decide to do right now.

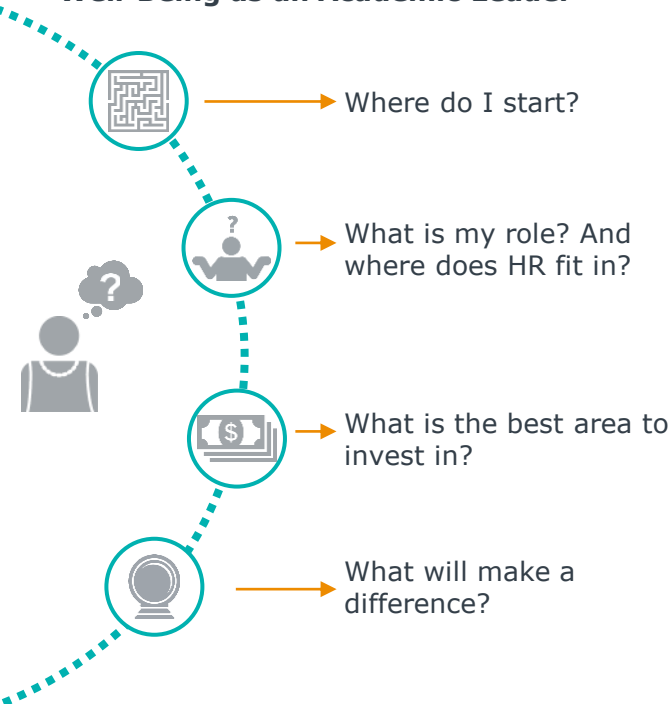
-The Chronicle of Higher Education

Hard to Pinpoint Your Role or the Best Starting Point

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The Role of Academic Leaders in Well-Being Still a Grey Area

No 'How-To Guide' for Supporting Faculty Well-Being as an Academic Leader



Realities Limit Academic Leaders' Abilities to Provide Support:

- ! Unable to address all pain points
- ! Lack control over some factors
- ! Some areas are an inefficient starting point

20%

Higher-ed employees are 20% less likely than employees across all other industries to say their institution understands their needs as an employee

Your Role in Supporting Faculty Well-Being

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Supportive Academic Affairs Workplaces Can't Happen Without Leaders

How Institutions Promote Well-Being

- ▶ Develop interventions aimed at reducing health risks and costs through promoting healthy lifestyles
- ▶ Implement screening activities to identify health risks
- ▶ Determine employee benefits



HR Is the Primary Owner, Academic Leaders Have Low Impact

- ▶ **Lead by example and demonstrate commitment** to creating a culture of well-being
- ▶ **Collect input systematically** to better gauge employee well-being needs and monitor programming effectiveness and opportunities for improvement
- ▶ **Upskill managers** to foster and encourage employee well-being support on a local level
- ▶ **Dedicate resources** and adjust policies to address critical employee support needs and foster a culture of care among colleagues



Areas Where Academic Leaders Have High-Impact



Critical Steps for Academic Leaders

Step 1: February 21, 2023

Focus on Faculty Burnout as a Systemic Problem



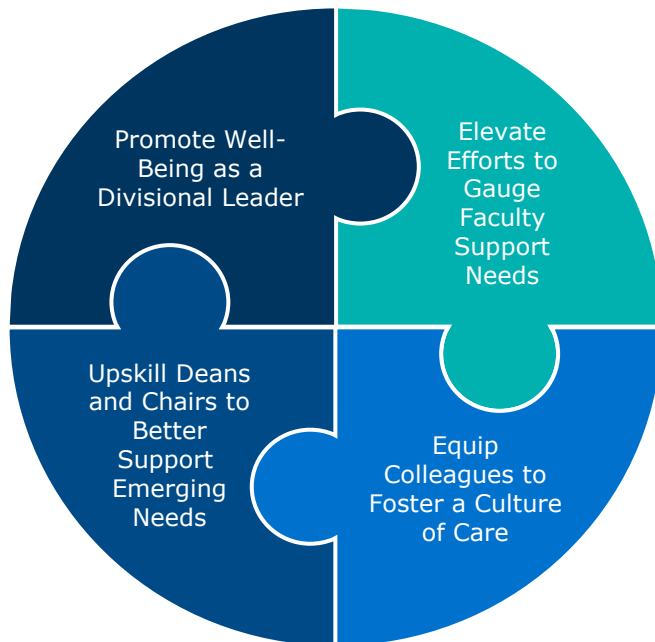
Define Burnout and Recognize Major Drivers



Understand Your Role in Well-Being Support

Step 2: March 7, 2023

Understand the 4 Ways to Support Faculty Well-Being as an Academic Leader



Next Session: Tactics and Tools to Bolster Support

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**Faculty Burnout –
A Workplace Problem,
Not a Worker Problem**

Coming Up...

2 Building an Anti- Burnout Culture in Academic Affairs

March 7, 2023



*Campus Ready Tactics
and Tools to Bring
Well-Being to
Academic Affairs*

Optional To Dos Before Event 2:

- ☐ Read EAB's whitepaper on [Tackling the Growing Childcare Crisis](#) to learn about family-friendly practices for alleviating childcare strain
- ☐ Complete the **self-reflection activity** to reflect on your role as an academic leader in combating faculty burnout
- ☐ Review your current state of faculty well-being support offerings and efforts to gauge needs
- ☐ Read additional [EAB resources](#) on faculty burnout

Final Thoughts

Please take a moment to answer this final poll question to provide your overall experience on today's session.

We have also shared a link to a short online evaluation in the **Chat** and we would appreciate if you could take 2-3 minutes to give us additional feedback on your experience today.

