Work/life balance is:
- personal satisfaction and professional achievement.
- maximum joy, sense of achievement, and satisfaction and minimum stress in all areas of work and life.
- keeping one’s sanity.
- working to live, not living to work.
- the flexibility to have quality time with family, work, and outside interests.
- contributing meaningfully to your profession and society while maintaining a sense of personal well-being.

Barriers to work/life balance:
- Academic culture based on an antiquated model.
  - In the past, many faculty had stay-at-home partners.
- Social norms.
- Lack of institutional policies and procedures to deal with unexpected personal and family obligations (e.g. illness).
- Unclear institutional processes and procedures.
- Lack of diversity in types of families. Expectations are based on traditional family model.
- Job creep: work fills all time available.
- Being a perfectionist.
- Unclear expectations, both internal and external.
- Heavy teaching, research, and service workload.
- Too many opportunities—don’t want to miss or turn down.

Strategies for developing and maintaining work/life balance:

- Individual:
  - Self-advocate, and ask for resources, support, and recognition effectively.
    - “To be successful, I need ______.”
  - Find a mentor, role model, or life coach.
  - Manage by objective: create concrete objectives and goals in work and personal life.
  - Be “present” in whatever you are doing, wherever you are, through mindfulness and compartmentalization. When you are at home, be at home.
  - Build professional relationships through collaboration and other opportunities to know others. Meet people outside the department.
  - Build a personal support system. Seek friends outside of academia.
  - Seek feedback from colleagues, including department head.
  - Seek clarity on promotion criteria, incentives, and rewards.
  - Seek clarity of expectations with family and friends through communication.
- Be reasonable with your expectations of others.
- Use humor as a coping mechanism.
- Prioritize, delegate, say no.
- Do hobbies and recreational activities.
- Take technology breaks. For example, designate a weekly no-email day.

**Institutional:**
- Create clear procedures and policies (e.g. SROIs).
- Maintain FORWARD initiatives after grant ends.
- Make developmental leave policy more faculty friendly.
- Faculty senate should continue to develop new policies and best practices.
- Hold meetings between 8:30 and 5:00 on days when school is in session.

**Resources**


