



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY  
HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER  
EL PASO

Office of Faculty Affairs  
*Faculty Wellness Program*

# FACULTY WELLNESS PROGRAM STRATEGIC PLAN

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## Introduction

### *Faculty Wellness Program*

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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## Who We Are

The Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso (TTUHSC El Paso) Faculty Wellness Program is housed within the Office of Faculty Affairs. This is a new program that started in 2019, and was developed to promote wellness initiatives that supports faculty health, quality of life, and professional success at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso (TTUHSC El Paso).

## Overview

The Faculty Wellness Program aims to assess the current landscape and the population needs in order to make informed decisions that will shape the priorities for wellness activities and educational opportunities, communication strategies, and policy, systems and organizational enhancements for TTUHSC El Paso faculty.

## Vision

To promote an organizational culture and healthy work environment that supports optimal wellness and professional fulfillment of the TTUHSC El Paso faculty.

## Mission

To identify and deliver an integrated comprehensive approach that optimizes wellness interventions and strategies that can influence individual behavior change and organizational culture to promote the wellness and career growth of the TTUHSC El Paso faculty.

## Stating the Case for Wellness

Unquestionably, there is a national prevalence of burnout among U.S. Medical School faculty that includes clinical care, research, and education. Self-reported data collected by the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), Standpoint Faculty Engagement Survey [1], showed that 29% of all faculty reported experiencing one or more symptoms of burnout. While, there were slight differences of burnout between the various departments (clinical department faculty with patient care 31%, clinical department faculty with no patient care 28%, and basic science department. 26%), there is a significant proportion of all faculty (43%) that feel under stress without reaching the burnout stage. Furthermore, these increased levels of burnout were associated with a decrease in satisfaction (department/school) and an increase in the intent to leave the institution.

Nursing and dental schools are no exception to burnout. There is a significant shortage of faculty in the United States that are needed to fill vital roles in nursing and dental schools [2, 3]. Subsequently, the demands on faculty can put them at greater risk of burnout [4], up to 39% nursing faculty report higher emotional exhaustion [5] and 28% of dental school faculty are overworked and understaffed. Given the prevalence of faculty stress throughout the various academic specialties, there is an urgent need to prioritize wellness initiatives that drive interventions at the individual, department, and organizational

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level to address problems that impede work-life balance, professional fulfillment, and institutional and individual factors associated with burnout.

The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, (2017) [6] states, “burnout is a long-term stress reaction marked by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a lack of sense of personal accomplishment”. Failure to adequately address job burnout can lead to significant health consequences [7]:

- Excessive stress
- Fatigue
- Insomnia
- Sadness, anger or irritability
- Alcohol or substance misuse
- Heart disease
- High blood pressure
- Type 2 diabetes
- Vulnerability to illnesses

There is a growing body of research that supports organizational and system changes to work toward lowering stress and burnout within a workplace environment. To illustrate, some practices of organization and unit strategies that support engagement to diminish burnout focus on cultivating a community at work [8, 9], improving bi-directional communication with leadership and faculty [8, 10], establishing a team-work culture [9], and using flexible schedules to incentivize self-care and to pursue meaningful aspects of work [11].

Although burnout is a concern, chronic diseases that affect the health and quality of life of faculty is just as important to address in a workplace environment. In the United States, about 1 in 2 adults live with a chronic disease and 50% of those adults have been diagnosed with multiple chronic conditions [12, 13]. The organizational costs associated with employees in poor health and with behavioral risk factors, include disability, workers compensation and high medical expenses, and elevated turn-over and absenteeism, and decreased work productivity [14].

Nationally, only half of adults get the physical activity that they need [12], and are not getting the benefits that moderate-intensity, low-impact physical activity provides, such as, improving pain, mental health, sleep, cognitive function, preventing weight gain, and lowering the risk of high blood pressure and stroke [12].

Fortunately, several risk factors are controllable through healthy behavior changes, addressing certain core behavioral risk factors such as poor diet, physical inactivity, and smoking, which have been a central focus on workplace health promotion efforts [15]. While the promotion and implementation of wellness programs vary, there are concerted efforts being made by academic institutions to improve physical, mental, and emotional health of their workforce.

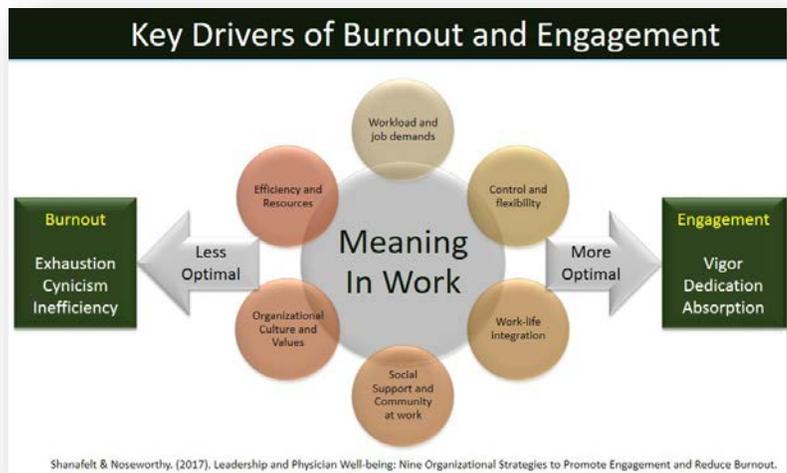
Worksite based health promotion programs have been used to reduce the costs of healthcare spending and absenteeism to improve productivity and quality of life, and facilitate retention and recruitment efforts for top talent [16]. The aim is to improve the overall health and prevention of chronic conditions that may affect the faculty at TTUHSC El Paso, by applying best practice interventions/strategies that shapes the organizational culture to support and influence healthy lifestyle behaviors, and assist with long-term self-management with those that already have a chronic disease.

# Introduction

## Faculty Wellness Program

# FRAMEWORK

The TTUHSC El Paso Faculty Wellness Program uses an integrated approach by applying best practice interventions that target key factors that have a direct impact on improving faculty health and well-being. The program is designing a conceptual framework that includes healthy lifestyle behaviors and the seven dimensions that contribute to burnout and engagement. The seven dimensions include: workload and job demands, control and flexibility, work-life integration, social support and community at work, organizational culture and values, efficiency and resources, and meaning in work [9].



## Models

The Social-Ecological Model is guiding the layers of behavioral influence on individuals, relationships, the workplace (units/organization), and social/cultural norms. This model drives a multi-component level approach for long-term sustainability. Additionally, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention has developed a comprehensive Workplace Health Model [17] to ensure the thoughtful design and planning is integrated for successful involvement in programs, and to determine the effectiveness of the interventions for long-term health outcomes. This comprehensive, coordinated approach encompasses four areas: workplace assessment, planning and management, implementation, and evaluation of interventions. The first step in the process is to do a workplace health assessment, which will better inform and shape best practice strategies for successful planning and implementation.



# CURRENT LANDSCAPE

## Assessment Analysis

The analysis below is derived from discussions during meetings with the Faculty Wellness Champions and feedback from the Faculty Wellness Town hall events that occurred in 2019-2020. These conversations revealed the needs and areas of concern that are sources of stress for faculty, and the key internal/external resources and barriers to assist with this strategic plan. The analysis was used as a roadmap to assess the current environment and what resources are available when moving forward with achieving future goals and objectives.

Internal	<p><b>INTERNAL RESOURCES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wellness champions</li> <li>Leadership support</li> <li>Internal Resources for Potential Collaboration with:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuing Medical Education</li> <li>Women In Medicine and Science</li> <li>Office of Diversity Inclusion Global Health</li> <li>Office of Faculty Development</li> <li>Office of Faculty Affairs</li> <li>Faculty Satisfaction Survey</li> <li>Reduced cost for gym membership</li> <li>Leadership development</li> <li>EAP (5 sessions/year)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		<p><b>NEEDS &amp; SOURCES OF STRESS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of gathering space for faculty</li> <li>Inefficiency of EMR</li> <li>Lack of flexing hours</li> <li>Vacation leave policy (non-competitive)</li> <li>Lack of Communication with faculty &amp; leadership</li> <li>Lack of Communication between different clinical sites</li> <li>No fitness center on site</li> <li>Need for more faculty/staff (critical mass)</li> <li>Limited capacity for identifying/supporting burnout</li> <li>Limited resiliency training</li> <li>Manpower/workload ratio</li> <li>Demands for increasing class size</li> <li>Lack of casual dress code on non-clinical/rounds days</li> <li>Lack of transparency regarding fiscal matters</li> <li>Lack of childcare facilities on site</li> <li>Limited Mental Health Services and Resources</li> <li>Lack of Appreciation</li> </ul>
	External		<p><b>EXTERNAL RESOURCES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Best practice (BP) burnout screening tools (ST)</li> <li>BP depression ST</li> <li>BP workplace models</li> <li>BP interventions/strategies</li> <li>UTEP partnerships</li> <li>Other University partnerships</li> <li>City/County partnerships</li> <li>State partnerships: Texas Government Code Chapter 664, the State Employees Health Fitness and Education Act of 1983</li> </ul>

# Assessment

## Faculty Wellness Program

### Data Gap

There is a data gap in the current health status, health behaviors, and needs/interests of the faculty for prioritizing and developing a robust strategic plan. Currently, the TTUHSC El Paso Faculty Satisfaction Survey (2018) [18] is the only source of data to draw from, until further data can be collected. This data does not provide an accurate picture to produce any baseline or trend data long term for the program, and was used to draw conclusions to shape the goals and objectives in this plan.

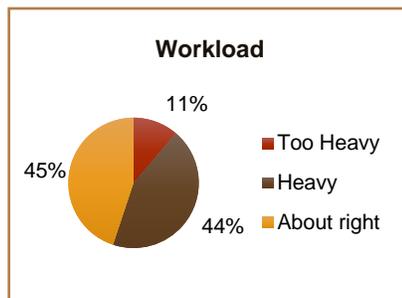
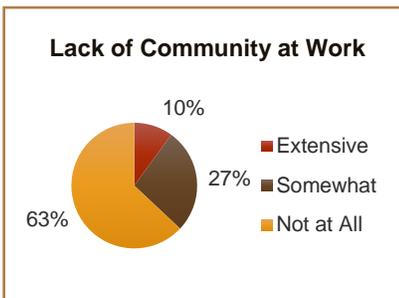
Specific indicators were extrapolated from the Faculty Satisfaction Survey that have the feasibility to be addressed through strategic approaches. Implementing proactive strategies that impact cultural norms for faculty to achieve work-life-balance can fulfill meaningful professional and personal goals.

### Faculty Satisfaction Survey (FSS) 2018 (Identified Key Indicators)

**Demographics:** Percentages below include 112 faculty respondents

- **Gender:** 44% male, 40% female, 15% prefer not to answer, 1% other
- **Race:** 40% White, 37% Hispanic/Latino, 7% Asian, 3% African American, 23% prefer not to answer
- **Employed:** 57% 0-5 years, 26% 6-10 years, 3% 11-15 years, 3% 16-20 years, 11% 21 or more years

### Sources of Stress



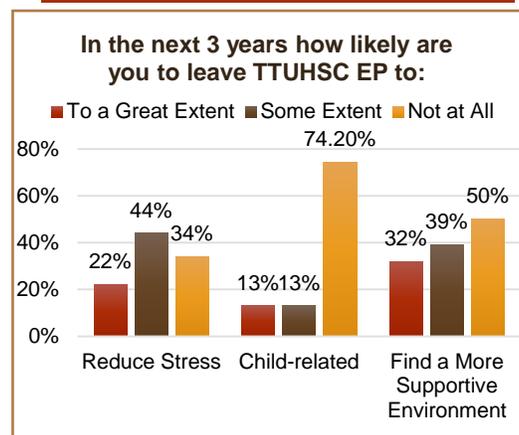
The Survey also captured faculty comments that were put into themed categories. Themes that were identified as a starting point for current planning included culture/environment (e.g., teamwork), facilities (request for more dining options and an exercise facility), and better collaboration.

### Attrition Contributing Factors

According to the FSS 2018, some of the themes related to wellness contributing to attrition include: to reduce stress, child related issues, and to find a more supportive environment. There is a growing body of evidence that supports higher levels of burnout with women faculty (35%) compared to men (26%) [1]. Some female faculty that participated in the survey may have higher rates of stress coupled with child-related issues for maintaining a work-life balance.

### Summary

Foundationally, the data provides a meaningful pathway to link the current factors to best practice interventions that will potentially promote and support mental well-being and physical health. As an example, tracking similar data points, such as, stress and perceptions of having a more supportive work environment can potentially measure program effectiveness if these improve. The Faculty Wellness Program initiatives will focus on having a direct impact on stress reduction, **enhance social engagement** and participation, and elevate the workplace environment and organizational culture to support wellness and professional fulfillment of faculty.



# GOALS/OBJECTIVES

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**Goal 1: To facilitate changes that optimize organizational culture that supports faculty wellness.**

**Objective 1: Optimize Healthy Eating**

**Strategies**

- Complete a nutrition assessment of TTUHSC El Paso Campus and affiliated hospital sites.
- Increase the number of healthy food options on campus.

**Performance Measures**

- Gap analysis of food choices and location options to meet work schedule demands
- Percentage of healthy food options on-campus and at affiliated hospital sites.

**Objective 2: Optimize Physical Activity**

**Strategies**

- Implement a faculty Voluntary Physical Activity Flex Time Policy.
- Implement three (3) physical activity/wellness interventions.
- Formalize the planning and development of an on-campus faculty gym/fitness facility.

**Performance Measures**

- Measures will be developed for interventions after priorities are identified

**Objective 3: Optimize faculty participation in the Faculty Wellness Program**

**Strategy**

- Develop and implement social media communication campaigns for the Faculty Wellness Program initiatives that target healthy lifestyle behaviors.

**Performance Measures**

- Measures will be developed during the planning process after priorities are identified.

**Objective 4: Optimize Social Engagement**

**Strategies**

- Complete an assessment of the current workspace environment that have dedicated spaces for social opportunities.
- Assess the feasibility and options of implementing communication channels for leadership at all levels and faculty to improve two-way communication.

**Performance Measures**

- Number of dedicated spaces in each department, unit, per building, per floor
- Number of ways that spaces are being used
- How often spaces are used (qualitative)

# GOALS/OBJECTIVES

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**Goal 2: To increase educational opportunities that promote faculty wellness and resiliency at TTUHSC El Paso.**

**Objective 1: Develop and sustain ongoing educational programming.**

### Strategies

- Provide support to faculty regarding COVID-19 by designing and disseminating multiple educational announcements and videos to promote health and wellness.
- Sustain faculty wellness by developing and facilitating WebEx support sessions during COVID-19.
- Plan and coordinate a CME Faculty Wellness Grand Rounds quarterly educational series.

### Performance Measures

- Number of educational materials that are developed and disseminated
- Number of media outlets through which each educational announcement/video were disseminated
- Number of attendees (support sessions)
- Number of faculty that attend/participate in educational sessions
- Number of needs/challenges and common themes from discussions

**Objective 2: Implement and sustain a Wellness Champion Network.**

### Strategies

- Complete a Wellness Champion Training series for four (4) cohorts of faculty.
- Implement final assessment survey to assess wellness champion resilience skills (Wisdom Scale, Sleep Hygiene Index, and Applied knowledge Measures).
- Foster departmental wellness activities through trained Wellness Champions' encouragement, education, and modeling of health and well-being practices in their respective departments.
- Complete a facilitated faculty panel discussion on Resilience.

### Performance Measures

- Number of faculty that complete the training sessions
- Assess whether learning objectives were met
- Track the use of applied skills/practices within the Champions daily lives
- Track the use of shared skills/practices that Champions apply within units/departments

**Goal 3: To monitor wellness and promote early detection of burnout of the faculty at TTUHSC El Paso.**

**Objective 1: Conduct Faculty Wellness Survey, AAMC StandPoint survey and other assessment tools to monitor faculty wellness**

### Strategies

- Establish reporting and tracking mechanisms for monitoring program progress.
- Complete a Workplace Faculty Wellness Assessment of the TTUHSC El Paso faculty; health status, lifestyle behaviors, and needs/interests.

## **Planning/Implementation**

### *Faculty Wellness Program*

- Complete updates to Strategic Plan (from analysis of the Faculty Wellness Survey, and both environmental assessments; nutrition and dedicated space for social opportunities).

#### **Performance Measures**

- Health Status, Health Behaviors, Interests/Needs measures
- Key indicators from the AAMC StandPoint Survey

#### **Objective 2: Adopt and apply screening and referral mechanisms of faculty burnout**

##### **Strategies:**

- Complete an assessment of referral mechanisms for faculty to get support and services.
- Develop and disseminate a burnout tool to all faculty.

##### **Performance Measure**

- Assess collected burnout tool responses

## Planning/Implementation

### Faculty Wellness Program

## Where We Have Been

Since 2019, the Faculty Wellness Program has been building the infrastructure for the underlying framework of the program. Through preliminary research, assessment, and planning this strategic plan was being developed to guide future program activities. Additionally, a variety of educational sessions were conducted in 2019 that provided faculty with learning opportunities that focused on health and wellness. Educational opportunities were offered through faculty development activities, discussions around wellness topics during grand rounds, cross-promotional programming with other departments, and providing educational workshops/trainings upon request.

### **Educational Sessions in 2019:**

- Internal Medicine Grand Rounds  
Calm and Smart: Healing the Healer  
| April | 36 attendees
- Two Faculty Wellness Town Hall Meetings  
| April | CME | 55 attendees
- Faculty Development Course presentation  
TTUHSC El Paso Wellness Initiatives  
| May | 20 attendees
- Faculty Wellness Champion Monthly Trainings  
| July-May2020 | CME | initial cohort of 10
- Women in Medicine and Science Session  
Presents Faculty Wellness Town Hall Session  
| July | 40 attendees
- TTUHSC El Paso Faculty Conversation with  
Colleagues (Following El Paso Mass Shooting)  
| August | 16 attendees

### **Champion Wellness Network**

The first cohort of faculty wellness champions are participating in monthly continuing medical education trainings that target burnout factors, and the use of wellness tools and resources that can be adopted by faculty and departments to improve work-life-balance. This network allows for an exchange of ideas and problem solving for implementing strategies to address burnout.

## Where We Are Going

As we move forward toward 2021, the Faculty Wellness Program will have completed an extensive assessment and analysis of the needs/interests, health behaviors and status of the faculty. This analysis will expand and refine the scope of work for future program planning for 2021.

The focus in 2021 is to apply best practice strategies that impact the work environment and lead toward cultural norm changes that influence healthy behaviors and coping skills. This integrated approach supports a population-based model targeting all faculty at TTUHSC El Paso using public health practices.

Awareness campaigns that promote healthy lifestyle behaviors and stress management (e.g., CDC messaging) will be used to raise awareness and enhance confidence or beliefs for applying practices into the daily lives of faculty.

Comprehensive campaigns are imperative for increasing educational awareness of health benefits, health effects, and tips/strategies on encouraging healthy lifestyle behaviors and stress management practices. These messages will be linked to program activities, policies, environmental changes, and/or promoting initiatives.

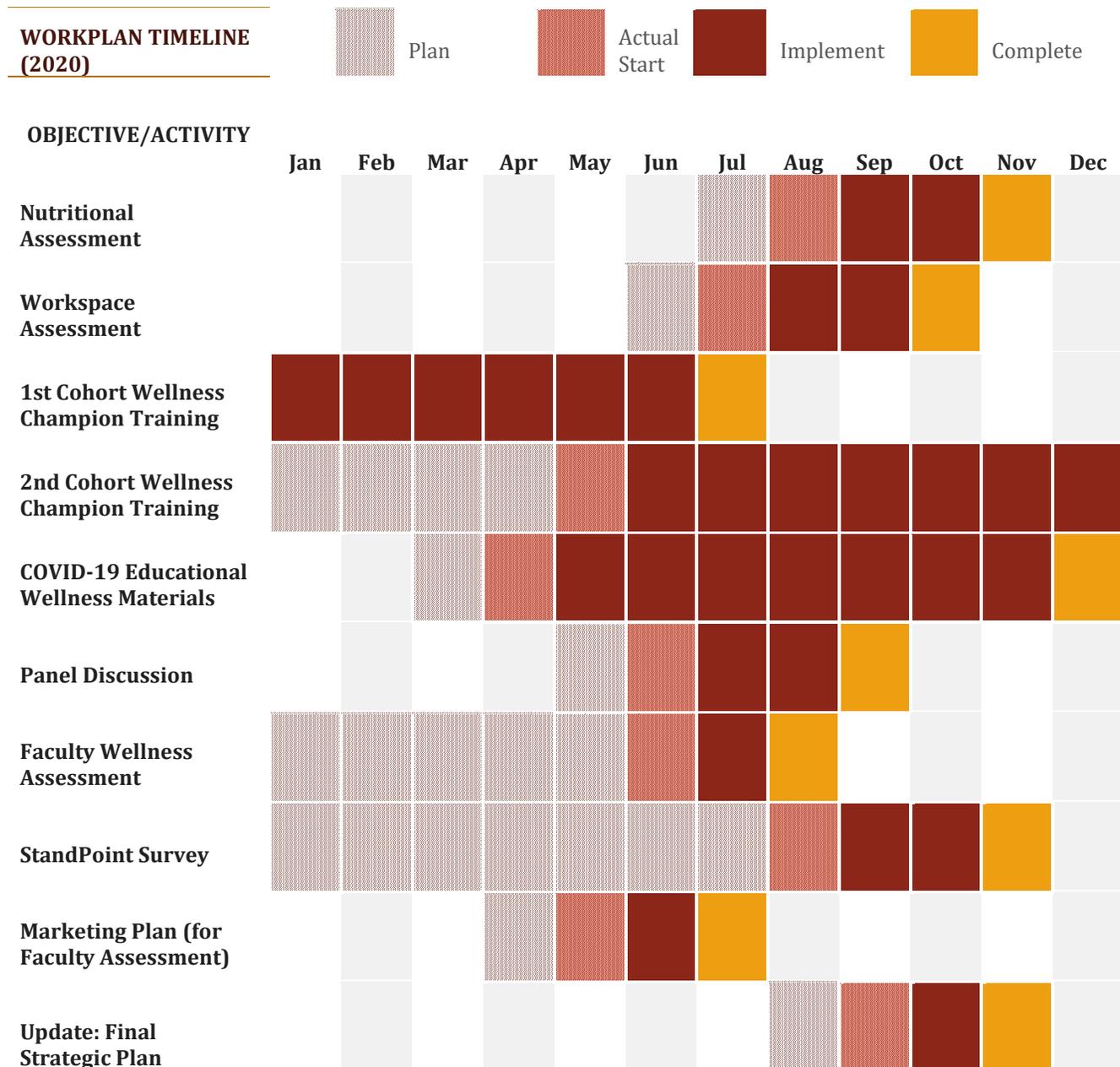
Ultimately, the Faculty Wellness Program is striving to integrate a wellness culture in the daily practices of TTUHSC El Paso faculty. By implementing policies, practices, and interventions that are sustainable long term, will drive a culture of health that prevents burnout and fosters wellness toward work-life-balance.

# Planning/Implementation

## Faculty Wellness Program

# TIMELINE

### Faculty Wellness Program



**Timeline is subject to change due to COVID-19**

The Faculty Wellness Strategic Plan and timeline will be updated after Dec. 2020. The assessment (s) findings will support the revisions and/or added priorities, objectives, and strategies for long-term health outcomes.

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