This guide is intended as a resource for you to reflect on your desired career advancement and work-life fit profile. This includes the following elements:

1. Tools and questions to articulate your work-life fit goals.

2. Tools and questions to prepare for a career planning conversation: reflect on your career objectives, desired workload, role, and time allocation.

3. Consider how policies in existence at Stanford can be leveraged in designing your desired work-life fit.
Before you start: envision what is possible

Before you begin, commit to shifting your mindset about what is possible. Here are some thoughts you may be having that can stand in the way.

*Old thought:* This will never work. Our workload is too high and academia is “up or out.”
*New thought:* It’s worth trying something different. All of us are already making tradeoffs and this is a way of formalizing and making these choices transparent.

*Old thought:* The system is broken. It’s not possible to have work-life integration in academia.
*New thought:* I can take charge of my own work-life plan and determine what I need to be successful in my career and in my personal life.

*Old thought:* I don’t need this. I have a stay-at-home partner and we have made the work-life tradeoffs we needed to make already.
*New thought:* Even if I don’t change anything with my current arrangement, it is worth considering whether I can improve on anything.

*Old thought:* We are doctors and scientists. People who want a “life” should pick another profession.
*New thought:* We are losing qualified people because of the old way of thinking. Replacing them is costly. Career planning and recognizing work-life fit increase career satisfaction, retention, and productivity. There is also evidence that patients do better if their doctor isn’t burned out. This can make us better as a team and as an institution.

*Old thought:* I don’t have kids. This isn’t about me.
*New thought:* Work-life integration is everyone’s issue. I can seek greater flexibility for any reason.
Part 1. Tools and questions to articulate your work-life fit goals

Consider the following questions to prompt your thinking as you think about your work and life goals.

**Work:**

- What are your career goals for the next year, 3-5 years, and 10 years out?
  - What are you most passionate about?
  - What motivates you? *(This can be specific type of work, recognition, team/colleagues, financial rewards, title/rank, etc.)*
  - Are your goals aligned with what you are most passionate about and what motivates you?

- What is your current work-life fit satisfaction?
  - If you could change one thing about your work-life fit, what would it be?

- How much of your time and energy is currently dedicated to work?
  - Would you like this to be different?

- How do you define success in your work and life personally?
  - How do the Department/Division and institution define success?

- What are the key challenges you currently face in meeting the demands of your work?

**Family:**

- Are you expecting to start a family or add to your family in the next 3-5 years?

- If you have children, are you a single parent, in a dual-career relationship, or have a stay-at-home partner?
  - What are the priorities of your spouse and/or family with regard to your time allocation now and in 3-5 years?

- If you have children, what are their current needs?
  - Where will their needs be in 3-5 years and how will their needs have changed?

- Are you currently facing caring for aging parents, or are you expecting to face eldercare responsibilities over the next 3-5 years?

- How is your spouse involved in caring for dependents and how does your spouse expect to be involved over the next 3-5 years?
• Are you currently facing some challenges in dependent care?
  o If so, what resources do you have at your disposal (both at Stanford and personally) to improve the situation?
  o If not, are you anticipating dependent care responsibilities over the next 3-5 years?

Friendships/Relationships:

• How important to you is time on friendships and personal relationships?
  o How does this fit into work and life goals?

Health, Sleep, Leisure, Exercise, & Hobbies

• What causes are especially important to you and how important to your well-being is it to be involved in your community? *(This can range from volunteering at your child’s school, to serving underserved communities as a doctor, to engaging in spirituality.)*
Part 2. Preparing for your Career Conversation: reflect on your desired pace, workload, schedule, and role

Where you start in terms of desired work-life fit should inform your decisions in terms of desired career customization.

Examples of pace modifications:

- My spouse plans to ramp up her career in the next 3 years after taking a break. I will need to increase my time at home, which may affect how fast I will progress.

- I want to increase my focus on work right now. I expect to start a family in 5 years so the time is right for me to speed up my career right now. I want to discuss accelerating my pace and explore ways to increase my scholarly focus.

- I am facing dependent care responsibilities that are taking a significant amount of my time. Maybe I should consider reducing my workload and FTE.

- I have neglected my health lately and feel less productive as a result. Perhaps I can tweak my schedule slightly to get exercise back in the mix.

A. Pace – What is your desired pace of advancement?

Pace is the rate of your career progression towards your next promotion.

- In order to determine the right pace for you, think about your current position.
  - How many years have you been at this rank?
    - When was your last promotion?
    - At your current pace, how many years do you have projected until your next promotion?
    - What do you need in order to achieve your next promotion in the timing you want?

- Important to consider:
  - If you are UTL: how many more years until tenure?
  - If you are MCL: how many years do you have until your next promotion?
  - If you are CE: when is your next promotion or reappointment expected?

- How does your current and desired pace affect your ability to achieve your desired work-life fit?

- What motivates you? (E.g., nature of work, financial rewards, recognition, title/rank, colleagues, time, specific parts of your work.)
B. Workload – What is your desired workload and work allocation?

The dimension of workload in ABCC focuses on two elements: the overall workload (reduced to full) and the distribution of work across university missions.

Examples of workload and work allocation modifications:

- I will increase my clinical or teaching load now and lighten it later.
- I will decrease my clinical load now and negotiate increasing it later.
- I will work on a grant proposal to secure some non-clinical funding to increase research time.
- I will increase my administrative time to pursue a leadership project, decrease my teaching load, or decrease my clinical load.
- I will consider my next professional development or sabbatical leave.

Overall workload

You can decide to keep a full workload (100% FTE) or opt for a part-time appointment at a reduced workload. In considering your options on workload, think about the following questions:

- What are your financial constraints?
  - If you are considering a part-time work arrangement to enable you to achieve greater work-life integration, how will you handle the financial tradeoffs?
  - Are the tradeoffs worth it to you personally?

Work allocation across missions

Each faculty member performs work in several areas of clinical, teaching, research, administration (leadership responsibilities), and service (committee appointments, mentoring, representing Stanford on national taskforces, etc.). Work allocation across missions is related to work satisfaction. Desired allocation and proportionality of time allocation across missions will be a key part of your career planning discussions.

- How is your time currently allocated cross missions?
  - How could this look different?

- What are you most passionate about in your work?
○ Do you get to spend at least a portion of your time on what you are most passionate about?

• What will you focus on in the next year and does this focus align with your professional and personal goals?

• If you want to put less time on one mission and more on another, how will you discuss this with your Department Chair/Division Chief and consider your own funding needs and team-level needs?

• Where do you need to focus your workload allocation in order to achieve the pace of career advancement you seek and to achieve your long-term career goals?

Note: Depending on your position and criteria for promotion along lines, you may have a varying degree of possible flexibility in your workload allocation. While all faculty can contribute to all missions, lines and Department/Division needs may constrain immediate choices. One of the goals of career conversation is to understand the gap, if any, between current work allocation and desired work allocation, and find appropriate feasible solutions.

Notes:
C. Schedule – What is your desired and feasible schedule predictability?

Depending on your work-life fit needs, you may be comfortable with a highly unpredictable schedule or you may prefer specific and consistent times in the office or in clinic.

*Examples of schedule modifications:*

- I will work a very specific clinical shift to accommodate my dependent care responsibilities.
- I will work 7 days on shift, 7 days off shift to get more focused time on research while meeting the clinical needs of the Department/Division.
- I will take extra shifts for the next 6 months to enable a reduced shift load later without dropping my FTE status.
- I will leverage the fact that I am a night owl to take on less desired nightshifts, enabling me to pick up my child at school.
- I will sign up for a leadership/administrative task involving a buy-down of some of my clinical constraints.
- I will set days to work form home when possible to increase uninterrupted blocks of time.

Consider the following questions as you reflect on your desired schedule.

- What is your current typical schedule?
  - Do you have day-to-day flexibility in terms of where you focus your energy?
- Does your clinical schedule enable you to have sufficient focused time on other missions?
- Do you need a predictable clinical schedule or do you thrive on change in your schedule?
- Do you have specific work-life fit goals (dependent care constraints, hobbies, travel) that affect your desired schedule?
Notes:
D. Role – What is your desired team role?

The role dimension goes from Individual Contributor to Leader. Your decision on role should flow from your current career goals, career stage, workload allocation, and desired work-life fit. Depending on where you are at in your career and the available opportunities for you, you may decide you want to be an individual contributor, focusing on your clinical, teaching, and/or research activities. Or, you may consider leadership opportunities such as serving on committees, leading a Departmental program or initiative, representing the Division in national initiatives, etc.

Examples of role modifications:

- I will be an individual contributor now to maximize my focus on research and clinical work. I will plan to take a leadership role in 3 to 5 years as medical director.
- I am at the pre-retirement stage and plan to decrease my focus on leadership and go back to individual contribution. I will identify a successor for my leadership role.
- I will increase my focus on leadership after I obtain tenure.

Consider the following questions when deciding on your desired role:

- Is this role focus in keeping with your career advancement goals?
- Will this role provide you with the desired work allocation across missions?
- How will this role affect your schedule flexibility?
- How do you anticipate your role changing over time?
  - What are you most passionate about?
Part 3. Consider policies and resources in place to help you achieve your desired career profile

University Administrative Policies

- Sabbatical leave [UTL, MCL, NTL]
- Period of pure research leave [UTL, MCL, NTL]
- Professional development leave [CE]
- Paid conference leave [CE]
- Time off with pay [all lines]
- Disability leave [all lines]
- Leave without pay/leave of absence [all lines]
- Consulting days [UTL, MCL, NTL]
- Promotion extension [UTL, MCL, NTL]
- New parent promotion extension [UTL, MCL, NTL]
- Part-time appointments [all lines]
- Part-time appointments for pre-retirement faculty [UTL, MCL]
- Reduction in teaching or clinical duties for new parents [UTL, MCL, NTL]
- Maternity leave [all lines]
- Leave for new fathers and registered domestic partners [all lines]
- Extended parental leave [all lines]
- Childcare/adoption support [all lines]
- Childcare subsidy program [all lines]
- Onsite childcare [all lines]
- Junior faculty child care assistance program [UTL, MCL, NTL]
• Junior faculty dependent care travel program [UTL, MCL, NTL]

• Emergency backup childcare and eldercare [all lines]

• ElderCare resources [all lines]

• Tuition grant program for dependents [all lines]

• Reduction in teaching and/or clinical duties following birth or adoption [UTL, MCL, NTL]

• Additional policy resources:
  
  o **Stanford Faculty Handbook**: facultyhandbook.stanford.edu
  
  o **School of Medicine Office of Academic Affairs**: med.stanford.edu/academicaffairs
  
  o **Stanford WorkLife Office**: worklife.stanford.edu
University Health and Wellness Resources

- **Stanford Committee for Professional Satisfaction and Support (SCPSS):** The SCPSS (Stanford’s physician wellness group) provides extensive resources and self-assessment tools on wellness, work-life balance, health, and time management. [wellmd.stanford.edu](http://wellmd.stanford.edu)

- **Health Improvement Program (HIP):** All Stanford employees can participate in a variety of health improvement and fitness programs. [hip.stanford.edu](http://hip.stanford.edu)

- **BeWell@Stanford:** A program for all Stanford employees focused on health and wellness. [bewell.stanford.edu](http://bewell.stanford.edu) Full list of resources for Stanford faculty and staff at: [bewell.stanford.edu/resources/staff](http://bewell.stanford.edu/resources/staff)

- **Stanford Coordinated Care:** A Stanford Hospital program for Stanford employees and retirees experiencing chronic conditions. [stanfordhealthcare.org/medical-clinics/coordinated-care.html](http://stanfordhealthcare.org/medical-clinics/coordinated-care.html)

- **Faculty Staff Help Center (FSHC):** The Stanford Faculty Staff Help Center (FSHC) is focused on providing Stanford employees with counseling and short-term support in addressing mental health issues. [helpcenter.stanford.edu](http://helpcenter.stanford.edu)

- **Office of Religious Life (ORL):** The Stanford ORL has a mission to ensure lively, thoughtful, and supportive contexts for Stanford students, faculty, and staff who wish to pursue spiritual interests. [web.stanford.edu/group/religiouslife/cgi-bin/wordpress/](http://web.stanford.edu/group/religiouslife/cgi-bin/wordpress/)