



Greetings, Jaguar Nation, and welcome to a new semester and to a new year.

Whether you made none, one or several New Year's resolutions, a new calendar year and a new semester mean new beginnings and a fresh start for us all. For many of us, that also means making new plans for this semester and this year.

Speaking of plans, the start of the new year and a new semester is a perfect time to reassess the harmony between your personal life and your career (faculty and staff) or studies (students) and to develop a career and life plan for fulfillment. I have enjoyed getting to meet and know many faculty, staff and students from so many departments on campus as I have led nearly 20 workshops on this topic over the past two years, with more planned for this semester.

We seemingly make plans for everything, from vacation plans to financial plans to wedding plans to graduation plans. Yet, very few of us have a plan for arguably one of the most important things of all: work-life harmony.

Millions of individuals struggle with their work-life harmony. The problem is so severe that our nation's Chief Public Health Officer, the U.S. Surgeon General, released a special report in fall 2022 on workplace mental health and well-being that specifically calls out [work-life harmony](#). The COVID-19 pandemic challenged us all in terms of our work-life balance, and in the wake of the pandemic, millions have reassessed their work and life priorities, with many changing careers in the Great Resignation. Our personal lives and careers are so intertwined that a holistic plan that thoughtfully addresses both concurrently is urgently needed.



Neil MacKinnon
@aug_provost

Do you have a career and a life plan? If not, consider developing one. It can be one of the most impactful things you will ever do.

JAGWIRE @AUG_JAGWIRE · Dec 20, 2022

Neil MacKinnon, PhD, @aug_provost, has dedicated a significant portion of his career to researching and leading workshops on life and career planning. His most recent work has been published in the International Journal of Medical Education. go.augusta.edu/3WZJsiW

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Recently, I was interviewed for an [article in Jagwire](#) on the topic of life and career planning, and in that interview I mentioned how we want AU to be a model for work-life harmony, where our faculty, staff and students feel fulfilled in their personal and in their professional lives.

As I review in my workshops, there are seven components of a holistic work-life harmony plan: career, community and citizenship, discretionary time and hobbies, faith, finances, health, and relationships. I recommend developing a plan for each and reviewing your plan with someone else, ideally with a mentor, coach or another trusted individual. As noted in the U.S. Surgeon General's report, there are tangible benefits when this kind of plan can be achieved: "workers who feel they can better harmonize their professional and personal needs report greater satisfaction with their work and life and experience fewer symptoms of depression and anxiety."

My sincere wish for all of us this semester and beyond in 2023 is that you achieve work-life harmony and feel fulfilled in your career or studies and in your personal life.

I am looking forward to an incredible semester with you.

Sincerely,



Neil J. MacKinnon, PhD
Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost

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