

Call for Participation

Discussion Group Program: *Working Toward Wellbeing*

The 2026 AALS Annual Meeting will include a Discussion Group program entitled, “Working Toward Wellbeing.” The goal of the program is to educate the audience (and speakers) about the importance of wellbeing and about wellness techniques to ease the experience for various constituencies (students, faculty, staff, administrators, practitioners) in legal education and the legal profession. Two participants will be selected from this open call for participation to join the six confirmed speakers. More information on the program is below.

If interested, please craft a submission that includes your name, email, title, institutional affiliation, and a 250-word abstract of what you would share in your initial remarks; the submission should be sent via email to Dean Elizabeth Kronk Warner (elizabeth.warner@law.utah.edu) by October 15, 2025. Successful applicants will be notified by November 1, 2025. They must register and attend the AALS Annual Meeting in January 2026 at their own expense.

Lawyers are among the most anxious and depressed workers in the U.S. Job stress often leads to substance abuse and self-harm. These challenges begin in law school, where students are expected to master volumes of content while undergoing an intense process of professionalization. Despite growing attention to these issues, there are few coordinated efforts to promote wellbeing for students or attorneys.

This discussion group gathers scholars and advocates from various perspectives, using differing methods, all seeking to improve student and lawyer wellbeing. Whether collecting empirical data on the problems, promoting policy efforts to address needs, publishing scholarship proposing solutions, or through other means, the presenters will share how they individually and collectively work toward wellbeing.

The format will be for each speaker to share their research or experience for 5 minutes. These initial remarks are meant to stimulate a lively and engaging discussion that includes both the audience and the discussants; thus, after initial remarks, the program envisions an open discussion that revolves around questions from the speakers and the audience. As only 45 minutes will be taken up with the intro and initial remarks, the vast majority of time will be reserved for larger group discussion on wellbeing, including institutional efforts to promote wellbeing on their own campuses, student experiences with wellness, faculty experiences teaching about wellbeing, staff interactions with students on wellbeing challenges, and more.