

# Wellness

March 26-27, April 2 – 3, 2022

## The Symposium Challenge

The topic of wellness, in all its forms, has increasingly become a feature of modern life. At MBAIS 2022 we will look at what is meant by wellness; we will examine its evolution into this central role in the modern world – and its importance economically; we will examine its importance socially as well as individually; we will consider how governments view wellness; and we will look forward to the future of wellness.

*The challenge of the Montgomery Bell International Symposium 2022 is for students, after examining the meaning and evolution of wellness in all its forms, its role in society, its impact on and importance for the individual, and its importance to governments, to suggest the practical steps they can take to improve the provision of wellness in their own society.*

Over the first ten years of the Winchester International Symposium we considered a range of fascinating topics, each with unique importance and relevance to the host school; this is the second year of the Montgomery Bell International Symposium and that central purpose remains. Two factors common to each symposium have been the intellectual talent and commitment of the students, and the distinct cultural backgrounds that have so illuminated their contributions. In other words, a shared scholarship together with a unique cultural perspective have created an extremely fertile forum for discussing ideas. This will be as relevant and important as ever this year: at MBAIS we aim to look specifically at the role and importance of wellness in our different societies, at its relative importance and likely importance in the future, and to look at our individual and collective approach to wellness. This has particular resonance for MBA after the opening of its Frank Burkholder Wellness Center in January 2021, and of course for all of us in the era of a pandemic, individual versus collective responsibility, and the freighted question of vaccinations...

Students from the group of Symposium schools will come together either physically in Nashville, Tennessee, or virtually, in late March 2022, after having worked online for six months on the topic areas overleaf. Each school will draft a monthly 750-word response to a particular question set within each topic area; the response will follow a month of discussion of the issues arising from an introductory essay. The response will be posted online in the shared *Google* group, and submitted to TJP. Students will thus have a further week in which they are expected to comment on others' submitted responses.

As before, TJP will send participating students the introductory essay on each topic area, together with required and suggested reading, on the dates overleaf. Intermediate tasks – such as reading relevant articles, watching YouTube or TED talks, listening to podcasts – will also be assigned as appropriate. Students will again be encouraged to form their own social media group to become acquainted before the Symposium.

Student pairs will pursue a personal project which will examine one aspect of wellness in their own society. The specific project must gain prior approval. Students must submit their completed project presentations to TJP, by means of *YouTube* upload (or other common video format) ten days before the beginning of the Symposium; this will allow for greater consistency, as well as for accurate time management at the Symposium. Completed and approved projects will be presented at MBAIS.

At MBAIS 2022, students will discuss ideas during daily debates, listen to expert speakers, and respond to prompts that will allow them to use their online work. These responses will take the form of short presentations. At the end of the week, students will come together to draft The Symposium Accord, which will be a common response to The Symposium Challenge.

## Symposium Online Topic Schedule (and deadlines)

October 15, 2021 (Nov 15, 2021)	<b>The Evolution of Wellness and the Wellness Industry;</b> essay posted by TJP Students submit essays to TJP and post online for general comment
Nov 22, 2021 (Dec 22, 2021)	<b>Wellness and the Individual;</b> essay posted by TJP Students submit essays to TJP and post online for general comment
Jan 15, 2022 (Feb 15, 2022)	<b>Government, Society and Wellness;</b> essay posted by TJP Students submit essays to TJP and post online for general comment
Feb 22, 2022 (March 22, 2021)	<b>The Future of Wellness;</b> essay posted by TJP Students submit essays to TJP and post online for general comment
Jan 15, 2022	<b>Deadline for Personal Project approval</b>
Jan - Mar, 2022 (Mar 15, 2022)	<b>Personal Project work</b> Students submit completed personal projects to TJP

### **Block 1 (Oct 15 – Nov 15): The Evolution of Wellness and the Wellness Industry**

What is meant by “wellness”? How might we define wellness in physical, emotional, and mental terms? How and why has wellness evolved into its position today? Is the economic importance of the wellness industry a cause or a consequence of our growing awareness of the importance of wellness? How far might there be a connection between a growing awareness of our own wellness, and that of the planet?

### **Block 2 (Nov 23 – Dec 23): Wellness and the Individual**

How far should individuals take responsibility for their own wellbeing (as opposed to relying on governmental or corporate guidance)? What is the role of the public understanding of science in this context? Should individuals consider predominantly themselves and their immediate family when urged to take action on wellness issues such as obesity, body image, vaccinations? How far does social media help or hinder individual wellness?

### **Block 3 (Jan 15 – Feb 15): Government, Society and Wellness**

What is the correct balance between government and individual responsibility for the wellness of society? How can governments change behaviour to promote wellness (e.g. “nudge” theory, behavioural economics). To what extent can the success in reducing the incidence of smoking be applied to improving other forms of wellness? How far do MBAIS member schools / societies differ in their view of the correct role of government in promoting wellness?

### **Block 4 (Feb 22 – Mar 22): The Future of Wellness**

Do recent changes in behaviour (e.g. the reduction of alcohol consumption among the young) point to future changes? Should social media be more tightly controlled by governments? Will the obesity epidemic continue apace? How far do the continued economic and population growth of large countries pose particular global challenges in terms of wellness and climate change? How optimistic are MBAIS schools for the future of wellness in their own societies?

### **Personal projects (Jan – March, 2022. Deadline March 22, 2022):**

Students must complete an independent and original investigation into an aspect of wellness of their choice, but from their home country, concentrating on one of the four themes above. The project must be approved by TJP by **January 15, 2022**. The completed investigation must be uploaded as a video presentation (to a platform such as *YouTube*) by **March 15, 2022** and take no more than ten minutes in total. Students will present their projects during MBAIS 2022.