Work-Life-School Balance in New Orleans

June 4, 2025



Millions of college students work while pursuing their degrees. In the fall of 2022, about 19 million people attended colleges and universities, including more than 3 million in graduate programs, according to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), meanwhile, reveals that roughly 40 percent of full-time college students hold down jobs and more than 80 percent of part-time students work while enrolled.

Employment rates among graduate students — many of whom have already begun their careers — are generally even higher. These students continue working while pursuing an education for a variety of reasons. Some work to finance their degree, others to develop their professional network or simply to hone their skills.

For working students, balancing their job, studies, and personal life is critical to their overall success. Maintaining a healthy work-life-school balance benefits their mental well-being, fosters their academic and professional development, and enriches their personal fulfillment.

Selecting a graduate program in a setting like New Orleans — which offers rich cultural and recreational opportunities as well as a reasonable cost of living — can allow students to deepen their lives beyond work and school.

What Is Work-Life-School Balance?

Work-life-school balance refers to the equilibrium a person maintains while managing the demands of their career, education, and personal life. Many Americans struggle to achieve an ideal work-life balance, with 66 percent of workers reporting some level of burnout, according to a recent survey by Moodle. Adding academics to the mix complicates this even further.

Despite this, graduate students often continue working while enrolled. Students have various motivations for maintaining employment, such as:

- Funding their education
- Paying for their living expenses
- Supporting their family
- Gaining experience and honing their practical skills
- Developing a professional network

Regardless of the reason, students who choose to work while attending graduate school need to strike the right balance among their work, life, and school activities to achieve success in and outside of the classroom.

Why Is an Optimal Work-Life-School Balance Important?

For working students, figuring out how to balance a job, schoolwork, and personal commitments is about more than just finding a way to juggle their competing schedules. It is about them prioritizing their well-being and making intentional choices that set them up for success. Finding this balance can yield all sorts of benefits, such as:

- Reduced stress
- Less risk of burnout
- Stronger social connections
- Improved academic performance
- Greater productivity at work

The Benefits of Maintaining a Good Work-Life-School Balance in New Orleans

College students often have demanding schedules — particularly graduate students, and especially those who work while they pursue a degree. Tulane University's graduate programs at the Freeman School of Business offer the flexibility working professionals need.

Students taking classes on Tulane's New Orleans campus can take advantage of the city's vibrant culture and affordable living, which support a healthy work-life-school balance. These features make New Orleans one of the more desirable locations for college students, who make up roughly a quarter of the city's population.

Food and Culture

New Orleans is renowned for its diverse and vibrant food scene. Of the cities ranked in Tripadvisor's 2024 list of the best food destinations in the world, New Orleans is the only U.S. city to crack the top 10, joining the likes of iconic international locales like Rome, Paris, and Barcelona.

Additionally, New Orleans hosts myriad cultural events and attractions every year, from its famous Mardi Gras celebrations and the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival to ghost tours and steamboat cruises, providing students with plenty of recreational opportunities year-round.

Cost of Living

Forbes recently ranked New Orleans as the best city for college students, citing, among other things, its reasonable cost of living. Among the 35 U.S. cities on the publication's list, New Orleans ranks in the lowest 25 percent for rental costs and boasts the second-highest rental vacancy rate.

Transportation

Getting around New Orleans is relatively easy and affordable, an important variable for students seeking an optimal work-life-school balance. Transportation costs in the city are among the lowest 25 percent of all the cities on Forbes' list. The city also gets top marks for its walkability and bikeability. AllClear Travel Insurance recently ranked New Orleans as the most walkable city in the country and the fourth most walkable city in the world.

Tips for Balancing Work, Life, and School

Successfully juggling work, school, and personal commitments hinges on clear strategies, such as defining one's priorities, setting boundaries, and carving out time for rest and recreation. Applying a few practical approaches can help students avoid burnout and thrive both academically and professionally.

Prioritize and Organize

Using planners and/or digital calendars can help students stay on top of their work schedules, meetings, classes, deadlines, and personal commitments. These tools can enable them to manage their time more easily and prioritize their many responsibilities. They also can use them to schedule breaks, which can help them feel reenergized and boost their productivity.

Minimize Distractions and Set Boundaries

Having a dedicated space for studying and working — particularly for those with remote jobs — can help students minimize or eliminate potential distractions, like screens or socializing friends, allowing them to focus.

Additionally, establishing boundaries by setting specific work hours and communicating those boundaries to colleagues can help students more effectively manage their work and studies as well as make time for social activities.

Explore Alternative Learning Formats

Choosing a flexible learning format, such as through a part-time program, can facilitate a better work-life-school balance for students. A program with a hybrid

curriculum, where some classes are held online and others in person, or one with weekend and/or evening classes, also can provide students with greater flexibility that fosters a more balanced, sustainable schedule.

Invest in Self-Care

Setting aside time to focus on their mental and physical health is essential for students. By prioritizing self-care practices such as eating a healthy diet and getting enough sleep, taking a short walk during a study session, incorporating mindfulness and meditation into their daily activities, or going out to dinner with friends, students can recharge and maintain balance in their lives.

Achieve Your Goals Through Balance

Achieving an ideal work-life-school balance takes intention and effort, but it can pay dividends. With the right strategies, students can manage their time more effectively, which can lead to greater academic, professional, and personal success.

For students at Tulane University's Freeman School of Business, finding this balance is especially advantageous, as it allows them to pursue a degree and advance their career while also enjoying all that New Orleans has to offer. Our flexible programming, with online and part-time options, is designed to support working professionals looking to enhance their skills through education.

Discover the benefits of a Tulane education today.

Sources:

- AllClear Travel Insurance, "The World's Most Walkable Cities"
- Business News Daily, "How to Improve Your Work-Life Balance Today"
- Forbes, "Best Cities for College Students and Graduates 2024"
- Indeed, "12 Tips for Balancing Working Full Time and Going to School"
- Indeed, "How to Balance Work While Going to School (Specific Tips)"
- Moodle, "Over Half of American Employees Have Used AI to Take Workplace Training, According to New Data"
- National Center for Education Statistics, Back-to-School Statistics
- Tripadvisor, Travelers' Choice Awards: Best of the Best Destinations
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Labor Force Participation Rates of College Students Differ by Enrollment Status and Type of College