Strategies for Success in Balancing Full-time Work with Doctoral Studies

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What’s going down

• How did we get here today?
• Who is here with us today?
• Share our stories, and advice for success
• Discussion, questions
Who Am I?

• Assistant Dean of Students, Director Fraternity & Sorority Programs, University of Arizona

• Ph.D. Higher, Adult, & Lifelong Education, Michigan State University, May 2016
My Doctoral Journey

• I'm Ph.D. Done
• I had a plan and stuck to it #OperationNoSnow
• Worked fulltime all throughout my PhD
  – Research associate with the National Study of LGBTQ Student Success
  – Presented at ASHE
  – Study Aboard to South Africa
• My dissertation explored the experience of Gay
Advice and Best Practices

• The Pomadoro Method (tomato-timer.com)
• Write/edit a little each day
  – Set aside dedicated writing/study time
  – You wont get through all the reading (skim)
• Use course paper to refine your dissertation topic
  – Use those papers as skeleton for you dissertation
• Present a scholarly paper or poster
• Transcription is worth the cost...so is an editor
Who Am I?

Angell Davis, MSW
Coordinator of Professional Development and Staff Training
Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs
Illinois State University

• Mom
• Business Owner
• Work in my Church
My Doctoral Journey

Research interests
• Retention of Black students and Black faculty & Staff in HWIs

My Motivation
• Non traditional started at 28
• 10 years straight 😊 😞
• Was on track to be a Marriage & Family Counselor
• 4th Year Doctoral Student-Higher Education Administration (done with classes)
Advice and Best Practices

Roadblocks/Challenges
• Divorce (1 year into program)
• Changing jobs
• Confidence
• Children
• Friendships
• Sleep deprivation

What made me successful
• CoHort
• Discipline
• Prayer
• Not worrying about being perfect
• My supporters

Advice
• Find a system of organization
• Find you at least one Bonnie/Clyde
• Fight for yourself and what you believe in
• Figure out what you want to study ASAP
Who Am I?

Ashley Hicks

• Assistant to the Dean for Student Services, College of Business at Illinois State University
• 4th year Ph.D. student
• Done with coursework, writing comps
• Mom, wife, budding photographer and tea enthusiast
My Doctoral Journey

Back to School Fall 2013

I said Yes! 2013

Baby in Dec. 2015

Graduate 2018!!!

Homeowner 2016

Married August 2014

Trust me I’m a Doctor (PhD)
Advice and Best Practices

• Find a “Ride or Die”.
• Work away from home. Going home is my reward 😊
• Write every paper/project on your dissertation topic.
• Don’t quit!
Who Am I?

• First-Generation Latinx male college graduate
• Partner; father of two young girls (3 & 5)
• B.A. from Grand Valley State University
• M.S. from Buffalo State College – SUNY
• Assistant Director of Involvement – Colorado State University
My Doctoral Journey

• Current educational status: Doctoral candidate currently in proposal stage (defending spring 2017).
• Research Topic: Ecological study of Latinx cultural center; how does the Latinx cultural center facilitate community amongst Latinx males?
• Research Interests: Campus ecology, Undergraduate Latinx males, Cultural Centers.
• Motivations: Academic career/path, family and improving the campus environment for students.
Advice and Best Practices

- Being real
- Grace
- Planning
- Support
Who Am I?

• First-generation student
• Married, two pups
• Program Coordinator – Off-Campus Life, Colorado State University
• PhD student at University of Northern Colorado
• BA - CSUSM, MS - CSU
My Doctoral Journey

• In coursework (August 2015-December 2017)
• 2 or 3 courses per semester
• Evening courses, commuting 45 minutes
• Established in, and maintained, same role at CSU
• Husband is also a graduate student
• Research interests: First-generation students, specifically their familial relationships throughout their educational journey
Advice and Best Practices

• No commitments to other humans
• Readjust expectations of my life
• Support from partner and supervisor
• Talk about research at work (connect the two lives)
• Protect specific times/days
Who Am I?

- CMU, UNK, Lynn, ISU
- Current role: Senior Specialist of Leadership and Community Connections at Illinois State University
- (Started the program)
- Single, no kids
- Proud Ravenclaw
My Doctoral Journey

• Started Fall 2013
  – 2 classes per semester, fall, summer, spring
• Motivation to begin/stay/complete
• Working on my Comprehensive Exam and Dissertation Proposal
  – Hope to graduate May 2018
• SOTL study on Alternative Breaks
Advice and Best Practices

• Cohort made me successful
  – Facebook page, calls, texts, class meetings
• Writing Days
• Read what you can and don’t beat yourself up if you can’t read it all
• Admit when you need help
• Thank you!
• Questions/discussion
• Other strategies