

Staying on Track:

Learning to Balance Work and Play

By Anna F. Campbell

"Nope, can't do it at 4:00, I have football practice for my hall's intramural team. How does 5:30 sound? Oh, wait, can't do it then either. I'm meeting the group I volunteer with for dinner to talk about the party we're planning for the children's hospital. Then I have to prepare a scene so I can audition for the fall play. Tomorrow's no good either. I have classes all day then band practice, then I need to write that article for the school paper, and I need to catch up on my sleep sometime. Sorry, Mr. Textbook, maybe this weekend we can hang out," I say to my too-long neglected psychology book. How did I get so busy?

Oh, yes, now I remember. It was the day I attended my school's activities fair. There were just too many choices. And with all the free candy, coffee mugs, and t-shirts being offered, how could I not visit their booth? Once there, signing up for more information was inevitable.

Don't get me wrong. College activities fairs are a great time to learn about all the

things you can get involved in. College is the time in your life to do more than just study. It's a time to find out what interests you. By getting involved with clubs and activities, you may find what you really love doing and be able to turn that into the vocation of your dreams. Joining the yearbook staff may make you realize how much you love design and editing. Or joining the school's debate team may help you conquer your long-held fear of public speaking, a plus in all aspects of life.

While activities and clubs really help make your college years the best, you do need to remember that getting a quality education is the No. 1 goal. Here are some tips to help you choose what activities you want commit to. And remember, college lasts four years – you don't have to do it all at once. 📖



Tim Webb photo

Pace Yourself!

Don't have preconceptions!

Don't assume things about a club or organization; find out for yourself. Just because you've always heard sororities and fraternities are all about parties doesn't mean it's true. They can offer a way to meet new people that you wouldn't have met ordinarily. The same goes for lots of other activities; just because someone else didn't enjoy it doesn't mean you won't.

Do ask questions!

Get more information before you decide to commit. If your school has an activities fair, ask people at the booth. If not, there should be a contact number for someone who knows about the organization.

Don't feel you have to commit!

Just because you signed up for more information, or even attended the first meeting, doesn't mean you have to commit; it just means you're interested. However, make sure that the others in the group know that you're just checking it out so they don't plan on your help.

Do make time for friends!

Don't get so busy with planned activities that you don't have time for movies, video games, trips to the mall, midnight runs to Wal-Mart and other spontaneous events with friends that make college the best!

Don't be afraid to say no!

Don't let pressure or fear of saying no make you say "yes" to too much too soon.

Do leave time to study!

Again, remember that your education is your first responsibility and primary concern.



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