

A Week in the Life of an MEMer



By Mary Gross (MEM 2008)

As a part-time MEM student in my final semester of the program, I split my time between my job as an engineer at a construction site at UNC Chapel-Hill and the MEM program at Duke. I originally came to North Carolina for my job with Hunt Construction Group as the general contractor for the UNC Genetic Medicine Building. I later entered the MEM program as a way to supplement the knowledge I was gaining in industry while my job is located near a university that offers courses that are relevant to my career field. On Monday, Tuesday, and Friday, I leave my workplace around 2pm for my afternoon classes and Friday seminar at Duke. I make up missed time by staying late on other weekdays and working at the construction site on the weekend.

As I have progressed through the program, I have become more aware of coworker's responsibilities and have learned how to better communicate with other departments such as accounting and legal. The biggest keys to balancing my academic and professional lives have been my company's unwavering support of taking the time I need off in order to focus on class work and fellow students in project groups being understanding of my need to meet later at night than is usually desirable. An up-to-date calendar is essential in keeping track of all the various meetings and responsibilities that come along with being an MEM student, especially when your schedule also has to include a full time job!