Part-time MBA helps staff members go further

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Rhonda Coignet joined the Tulane University Office of External Affairs in 2000, but the former communications major soon found herself taking on responsibilities beyond her training.



“Working at Tulane while going through the program provides a living laboratory for the material you cover during those three years — it’s not just theory,” says staff member Rhonda Coignet, who earned an MBA from the A. B. Freeman School of Business in 2005. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

“I was working on projects that had university-wide strategic impact,” says Coignet. “As time went on, I felt like I needed to learn more about the business side of the university and how everything fit together to support the academic mission.”

To gain those skills, Coignet enrolled in the Professional MBA Program, a part-time program of the A. B. Freeman School of Business that enables working professionals — including Tulane staff members — to earn an MBA degree in three years by attending classes two nights a week.

The PMBA, which is covered by the university’s tuition waiver program, may be a springboard to new opportunities. Coignet is now executive director of development administration and special assistant to the executive vice president, with responsibility for human resources, budgeting and operations in the development office.

“The PMBA program definitely helped prepare me for that,” Coignet says.

Patrick Foran, director of graduate admissions at the business school, says, “The PMBA has always attracted a certain number of Tulane staff members, but given the benefits of the program — both to the individuals and the university — we think that number should be even higher. A lot of staff members may be surprised to learn how easy it is to enroll and how manageable the workload is.”

The Freeman School is sponsoring a series of information sessions for Tulane staff members interested in learning about the part-time Professional MBA program. The information sessions will take place on Tuesday (July 30) at noon in the Hutchinson Memorial Building, Room 6001, and at 6 p.m. in Goldring/Woldenberg Hall II, Room 2125, and on Wednesday (July 31) at 11:30 a.m. in the Lavin-Bernick Center’s 1834 Club. RSVP to Linda Ricks or call 504-865-5492.