Work-Life Balance for Women in Higher Education: Perspectives of Athletic Training Faculty  
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**Context:** Women are largely underrepresented in the science fields of academia, most often issues with motherhood and career-life balancing are reasons for their disproportional numbers. Colleges and universities are beginning to implement and redefine policies that can support work-life balance for their employees, especially women faculty. This shift in focus has been attributed to the recognition that women faculty leave higher education at a higher rate than male faculty. In athletic training, career-life balancing has become the dominant factor for women leaving the field, as they feel as though they cannot fulfill the roles of mother, spouse, and athletic trainer adequately.

**Objective:** Examine the experiences of female athletic trainers currently employed as faculty members in a higher education institution  
**Design:** Qualitative Phenomenology  
**Setting:** Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE) programs.  
**Patients or Other Participants:** 16 female faculty members with (n=8) and without (n=8) children. This was purposeful as we sought to gain an appreciation for the role of a faculty member with and without the influence of parenting. 10 participants were married, 3 single, 2 engaged and 1 getting a divorce. The average age was 35 (±6.2, range 28-49, 2 did not report ages), average of 14 (± 5.9, range 7-25) years of experience as a certified athletic trainer and 11 average years of experience (1 did not report) teaching in athletic training programs.  
**Data Collection and Analysis:** A semi-structured phone interview protocol was followed and interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed. Thematic analysis of the data was completed with principles of an interpretative phenomenological analysis. Trustworthiness was established through peer review, member checking, and, researcher triangulation.  
**Results:** 4 key perspectives on women in higher education emerged: 1.) Multiple roles, including motherhood, causes difficulty in balancing expectations, 2.) Higher Education provides a culture of balance through flexible scheduling and work arrangements, 3.) Support networks include spouses and coworkers, 4.) Individual strategies such as time management and priority planning will assist in balance achievement.  
**Conclusions:** Unlike athletic trainers who are providing medical care, athletic training faculty members in higher education institutions often benefit from flexible schedules and a culture that supports balance. However, this does not always translate to a perception that work life balance is easy, particularly for women and mothers. Our results demonstrate that higher education can cultivate a climate of balance through flexible workplace arrangements, and the use of support networks. We found that motherhood was perceived to be a challenge, and balancing the role of motherhood created conflict. However, with time management and organization women were able to establish balance, regardless of their roles outside of the workplace.  
**Word Count:** 433