# Transcript: IT Podcast - Ep 22 - New Student Series - How to Accelerate

*The following transcript is a verbatim account of the video or audio file accompanying this transcript.*

Speaker #1 (Narrator):

WGU's IT Audio Series. Flexible, portable, profound.

Speaker #2 (Julianne Cook):

Hello, and welcome to the IT Audio Series. Today we wanted to chat with you about some topics specifically for new students. Although this information can certainly be helpful for anybody. Before we get started we wanted to introduce ourselves. I'm Julianne Cook, and I have been a program mentor in the IT college since 2012.

Speaker #3 (Jessica Galterio):

I'm Jessica Galterio, and I've been a program mentor in the IT college since 2015. In our experience we've seen a lot of different strategies for success as a student at WGU, and we wanted to share with you some of the best tips and tricks that we've seen for your first term.

Speaker #2 (Julianne Cook):

Students often come to WGU with a goal to accelerate their program. They want to finish early, save time, save money, get that dream job sooner and move to the next stage in their lives. Many students have been able to do this, but it isn't something that comes easy. It's something that requires hard work, dedication, and more than a little bit of planning. Here are a few tips from students who've been successful at accelerating.

Speaker #3 (Jessica Galterio):

Number 1, plan. Look at every course on your degree plan, take the course planning tool assessment and get a good idea about what you can expect from the course. One of my students did this and then made a spreadsheet where he gave each course a difficulty rating from one to 10, and then estimated how much time he thought each course would take him. This helped tremendously, to help him work with me to develop a timeline for his program, and we set goals based on what he thought was going to be more realistic based on his experience.

Speaker #2 (Julianne Cook):

Number 2, manage your time. This is one of the most important things for students who want to accelerate. If you approach your degree by saying, "I'll work on it when I have time," then you're going to find other things to do instead of working on your degree. Students who develop a very specific and detailed time management strategy are the most successful accelerators. What I recommend for this is using a tool. A spreadsheet can work, but there's lots of apps out there for time management. Account for each hour of study time that you want to get in, when you will study, what will you study, and when you want to take your exam or finish your project. When you have your time all laid out in front of you, it's just like following a map to your destination, graduation.

Speaker #3 (Jessica Galterio):

Number 3, and this one's tough, learn to say no, or not right now. This is definitely one of the hardest things that you'll have to do as an adult student. But if you really want to accelerate and you really want to stick to your graduation goal, you'll have to figure out a balance and a way to prioritize your studies.

You had a life before you started this degree, and you want to have a life again when you finish. Probably you also want to have a life while you're working on it too. But what this can mean is that you'll have to be very deliberate with what you say yes to, and no to. Hanging out on your buddy's house to watch a football game, that may be something you mostly have to give up while you're working on your degree program. That said, going to your son's football game on a Friday night, may not be something you're willing to give up.

When you want to accelerate, you'll have to learn to prioritize the time that you have available to you, and use it for your degree, with the understanding that when you finish your program, there will be football games to watch. But how awesome will it be to watch that game, on the new TV you bought, with the raise you got, after you finished your degree?

Speaker #2 (Julianne Cook):

Awesome. I love it. Number 4, ABS. No. Not anti-lock brakes. Always be studying. You'd be surprised where you can find time to study. Many of my students have put study material on their phone, they listen to podcasts while they're doing their laundry, maybe like you are. They review flashcards while they're in the waiting room at the dentist or in line at the grocery store, or they take a phone call with their course instructor on their lunch break. These students utilize every extra minute that they can toward their goal, which is finishing their degree early.

Speaker #3 (Jessica Galterio):

These are just a few tips that can help students who want to accelerate their program and finish quicker than the average student. There are many other factors that can contribute to a student's ability to accelerate, especially experience with topics that are in your program, but the key elements almost always boil down to planning ahead, managing your time well, and doing what works best for you. Thank you for listening to this episode. We hope that you found some great tips, and be sure to check out the rest of the episodes on the IT Audio Series, and good luck with your education.

Speaker #1 (Narrator):

Schedule time with your program mentor to explore more deeply. WGU, a new kind of you.