

How to make the most of your first two weeks in college

The first two weeks of my college probably should have taken place six years ago after my completion of high school. But some things can become an obligation in your journey including family, work, life and doing what is in front of you. It turns out starting college was one of the best decisions I have ever made, and I realized that very quickly. It has not only been beneficial, as I have enjoyed every minute but the opportunities to show what I can accomplish and what I can bring to the table has been very rewarding. I am both grateful and appreciative of everything I have learned so far, to my teachers and to everyone helping along my journey. That being said I will proceed to explain the routines and habits I have picked up along the way that have personally helped me.

Before classes even start can be a tough time for some students including myself but you soon realize it plays a huge roll in the starting process of your first two weeks. I say that because before you even register for classes there is a whole list of things that must be done, bought, and prepared for. That includes but is not limited to books, supplies, technology, getting payment plans started, having a parking permit, etc. The planning and execution of these steps are just the first hurdle in the college process. But again, necessary to make sure you're prepared for what is to come and that you have all the right tools and resources to prepare yourself for the coming semester. It seems like a lot, especially to first time college students, including myself, but really is the backbone and structure for the rest of the following semester.

The second thing students must be prepared for once classes start, is the impact school will make on your schedule and how learning valuable time management skills is helpful. That is the balancing act most if not all students have to endure with work, school, activities, etc. Additionally, including the time you're going to have to set aside to complete all the homework and studying that is in the foreseeable future. That is why time management is so crucial in college, setting priorities and knowing your obligations. Which directly correlates with what Carol S. Dweck says in her story "Brainology: Transforming Students Motivation to Learn" where she states, "As a result, confronting challenges, profiting from mistakes, and persevering in the face of setbacks becomes ways of getting smarter (Dweck 13)."

So, once you are accustomed to your new classes and teachers and have a general idea of the work that is going to be completed in the following semester comes the part most students including myself, don't always recognize or utilize to the fullest. That is the wide variety of student resources that are already at the campus for your benefit. That includes a lot at the Springfield campus, including a computer lab that is free to use, financial aid office, a library, and plenty of instructors and peers that are there for your own success and that have the eagerness to show yourself your true potential. Not to mention all the awesome people in the Carol Jones Writing Center that can help you through any and everything English or composition related. Which reminds me what my English teacher Sarah said the third day of class "Learn new things, don't be afraid, and defiantly don't be afraid to ask questions, that's what we love to do is help" (Sarah).

One of the main things in college that I think can hinder the success in classes for students the most is attendance. Regardless of the number of classes, the full or part time attendance is of the upmost importance. Not being there to see how the teacher wants you to learn or not picking up on useful tips that change the way you look at an assignment or how to study for said assignment or test. First thing you know, you miss a class and are left out in how to prepare and use the information. Then the next unit or chapter rolls around and you must build on what you missed and can be completely left in the dark about how to properly execute or accomplish certain tasks. This can be treacherous in the first two weeks of a semester and can throw anyone off. You almost must look at every class like a flight of stairs that are there to help you, guide you, and prepare you for your final and getting the absolute most out of whatever class you are taking. Again, getting in a good rhythm that works for you and sticking to it throughout whatever OTC throws at you is key to anyone's success in the first two weeks of a semester.

One of the next crucial things for any student's success is that he or she must be there to learn. Sounds simple, but attentiveness, motivation to learn, drive, and confidence can go a long way in the performance of anyone especially in a college setting. Even more important in the first two weeks of a semester again going to back to setting, making and following good habits couldn't be more vital in one's success at college. Also keeping in mind that new things can be learned or bettered upon with time and patience. That reminds of another quote from Carol S. Dweck that shows the effect of a growth mindset in a student population. She said "They

reported that these students were now far more engaged with their schoolwork and were putting considerable more effort into their classroom, learning, homework, and studying (Dweck).”

So once again, whether it is preparing, maximizing your resources, asking for help, having the right mindset and drive to succeed, or even something as simple as attendance every day. Every one of those things will not only help you set a good routine for the first two weeks in college it will set you up for future success throughout your entire college experiences and beyond. Its just finding what works for you, making the time, and putting in the work necessary for an easier first two weeks and knowing what all can be learned while you’re working towards your degree. Just having the right point of view and accepting each hurdle thrown at you is just an opportunity to show what you can do with it.

Works Cited

Dweck, Carol S. "Brainology: Transforming Students Motivation to Learn." Kuehner, Alison. *Writing to Read, Reading to Write*. New York: McGraw Hill Education, 26. 16. workbook.

Sarah. n.d.