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People always tell me I'm smart. That is why I get good grades. But that's not it, or at least, the whole story. It is being willing to ask questions, being willing to learn/make mistakes, and having a good work ethic that has allowed me to get where I am today. These are the qualities of a successful community college student. These qualities do not appear overnight, nor do they appear in a week. They take time to develop and refine. CCCC provides a great opportunity to learn these skills and has a great staff to help students achieve these goals.

Being able to ask questions is an essential skill to succeed in college, but also for life. This is not something that came easily at first and was probably the most difficult skill I learned to develop. I was afraid I was going to be judged or laughed at for asking the teacher questions during class. I sometimes was, but then I realized that it was the only way I was going to learn. And succeed. I needed to do what helped ME learn and ignore the side comments from my peers. Asking questions is the only way to fully comprehend what it is you are being taught. It is being willing to have the humility to say "I don't understand. Can you please help me?". Listening is a good starting point, but engaging is when the learning actually begins.

Making mistakes is inevitable. It is something that everyone does. It's part of what makes us human. It's also where the learning happens, but in order to learn these lessons, we have to first be willing. I am a perfectionist. It has something that has been with me my whole life and at some points, gotten me into trouble. I feel like a failure when I do something wrong whether it be getting a bad grade on a test or even asking for help. But making these mistakes and learning what I did wrong has made me a better student and a better person overall. I get to fail forward. Learning curves are not always fun. Especially in the moment. But mistakes aren't actually the point. It's what you learn from them that's important and whether you are willing to have an open mind about it.

A good work ethic is crucial to being successful in college. It's the only way you are going to stay on top of your studies. Knowing your strengths/weaknesses and what you can/can't handle is important. There are classes that I want to take, but I don't because I know that it would cause too much stress. I have to be okay with taking four classes per semester instead of five and I know I will do better in the long run because of it. It will make me more productive, efficient, and proud of myself because it means that I get to put all of my effort into my studies instead of rushing to get it all done. I also keep a list of everything that has to get done and I sometimes have to say no to my friends if I have a lot of work to do. It's hard when I have to say no to adding an extra class or going out late with a friend on a school night. On the other hand, no one ever said it was going to be easy. But it will be worth it.

Asking questions, learning from your mistakes, and having a good work ethic all play a part in the making of a successful community college student. Not only do they make you a better community college student, but they also make you a better person and prepare you to succeed in life.