

Student Success Tips

Work to Your Strengths

Research has shown that people who use their natural talents and gifts are happier and more successful than people who are trying to overcome a weakness. For example, if you are a math wizard, but hate writing essays, a career in journalism might be a stretch for your skill set. It sounds like a no-brainer, but you'd be surprised how often students let other people in their life (parents, spouses, friends, family members) unduly influence their career choice. Remember, it's your life and you'll be the one living with the positive and negative consequences of your decision. Haven't identified your strengths yet? Visit the career center at your college for a variety of services at no charge. In addition, visit DCCCD's Student Success Tools page at www.dcccd.edu/SuccessTools.

Develop a Strong Work Ethic

Pursuing a degree is work that will pay off for years to come, but, make no mistake, it is work. There will be times when you want to put off an assignment, intentionally turn in less than your best work or maybe even drop out. Make a commitment to yourself to work hard, do your best work and finish what you've started. Successful students persevere – especially when they feel like quitting. Everyone has those feelings at one time or another. But successful students find the help they need to get through tough times. You may need to get extra help from your professor or a tutor, or you may need to ask a friend or colleague to be your cheerleader throughout your journey to success. Do what it takes to get the job done.

Plan Ahead

Don't wait until the last minute to do things (for example, apply for admissions and/or financial aid, register for classes, complete your assignments or head out to class). By starting tasks early, you will ensure that you have time to take care of any unforeseen obstacles that might cause delays. If you know that it takes 15 minutes to get to class in good traffic, give yourself an extra 15 minutes in case there is a traffic jam. If you have a major project that counts for two test grades, don't wait until the night before it is due to start. You might have problems finding the information you need; your computer might break or your printer might run out of ink.

If you are enrolling in a DCCCD college for the first time, use the Admissions and Registration checklist on <http://www.dcccd.edu/AdmissionChecklist> to help you plan.



Dallas County Community College District

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IT ALL BEGINS HERE.

Make Connections

According to the 2009 Community College Survey of Student Engagement, students who have personal relationships with other students, college faculty and employees are more likely to succeed and accomplish their educational goals. Why? As mentioned above, there will be times in your college career (and your life) when you feel like giving up. When you do, it helps tremendously to have others around you who care enough to encourage you to persevere and who can offer strategies and alternatives that you may not have known or considered before.

Visit the following sections on <http://www.dcccd.edu> to help you make connections with others in DCCCD:

- Clubs and Organizations
- Learning Communities
- Study Groups
- Service Learning

Take Care of Your Body, Mind and Spirit

Successful students know that their body, mind and spirit are interconnected. You won't do your best work in college if you have physical, mental or emotional challenges. How do you take care of yourself?

- Eat healthy foods
- Get at least eight hours of sleep each night
- Avoid self-medicating with alcohol and/or illegal drugs
- Maintain healthy relationships and personal support systems
- Be as kind to yourself as you are to your friends

Note: These tips were developed and recommended by the Vice Presidents of Instruction and the Vice Presidents of Student Services of DCCCD's seven colleges and the Dallas TeleCollege.