

Julianna Curtis

Professor Collen Flanagan

English 1101

January 23, 2007

What College Means to Me



The memory of college, for some people, is a fond one, while for others it only brings up suppressed memories of late papers and stressful classes. College should not be about partying or drinking, but it also should not only be about the pressure to know exactly what you want, to know how you want to achieve it, and to not stray from your goals for even one second. For me, college is an important step in my career goals, but if that is the only reason for being in college, it will be easy and inevitable to get overworked, over stressed, and burned out. The requirement of a college degree for many careers is important, for the job would not be able to be properly done without the proper training. However, if that was the only meaning of college for me, I would be missing out on the vast array of opportunities that college has to offer. College is an opportunity to expand myself in areas I have developed and areas that I have not, so that I can become a more rounded person: a person better able to live life as an adult.

I am a very driven person, in my mind. But I tend to be lazy when it comes to self-motivation with my actions. Though I have improved much over the past few years, I still require the boundaries and deadlines that college classes offer me. Without them, I would not be able to expand my knowledge in subjects that I enjoy, such as math and voice. I have always enjoyed math and singing, since the time I could write and talk, and as my major is Finance and my minor is Voice, I am required to take Calculus I, Business Calculus II, and numerous music classes in college. I would not be able to do a self study in Calculus or teach myself anything about voice on my own. I need the structure of college for math, and the experience of the professors for learning about music and voice. College allows me, and others, to absorb the knowledge of experts in the areas that we choose.

College allows us to further expand, not only developed academic areas but also, our social areas, such as hobbies and the like. I took a debate class last semester, am now part of the SCC debate team, and desire to continue debate after dual enrollment. Debate has taught me how to “think on my feet,” how to be comfortable talking in front of people, and how to use sound reasoning and notice faulty reasoning. Debate has given me many useful tools that I will be able to use many years after I have stopped debating, and it has been a source of great enjoyment for me. I love the adrenaline rush during a debate round when I realize that my opponents have made a fatal error in their logic. In college I will be able to

learn many more advanced ways to debate and be given many more opportunities to debate than if I were not in college. College gives people an opportunity to develop areas of interest, other than only those of academia, to a greater maturity. For example, someone who was part of student government in high school would find a greater depth of responsibilities and leadership requirements in the student government in college. It would force them to expand their abilities and, therefore, themselves.

College allows people to try new hobbies, pastimes, and subjects that otherwise they may never have tried. Some of the things I or others try may not be what we enjoy or are good at. However, we may also find the one thing that we excel at in an area we would never have thought of before. In either case, trying them out will grow us as individuals and give us appreciation for things we never before understood. College is a chance to try debate, student government, painting, sketching, or pottery; all which are able to develop us further by doing things we never before have tried. I thought that I would enjoy debate, but I had never been in any form of a debate class before last semester and taking the class opened up a new, now favorite, hobby that I hope will last a lifetime. This semester I had to take General Psychology and I was not looking forward to the class at all when I signed up for it. Once I started the class, however, I realized that I thoroughly enjoyed psychology and now I am looking forward to the rest of the semester. I am

not planning to major in Psychology and I will probably not take any more psychology classes, but I feel very fortunate that I am this course because it has opened up so many ideas and answered so many questions for me about the way people think and how our behaviors are formed. I never would have thought that I would enjoy a psychology class, but that is one of the joys of college. Taking different classes and doing different things may not have anything to do with our majors, but they open up new realms of thought for us and teach us many diverse things, whether we enjoy the new class or hobby, or not.

While college is growing me in areas that I already am knowledgeable in, allowing me to pursue personal interests to a deeper level, and is adding to the facets of my life by experiencing new things, it also is deepening my character and understanding of the world through meeting a variety of different people. In high school, cliques are rampant, though thankfully I was able to avoid them, but college forces students out of their cliques in a more forceful way than high school does. In high school you may meet a few different people from different places that have recently moved to the area, but college is filled with many people from different places, states, or countries. In the fall, I attended a Leadership retreat with SCC over a weekend. While I have met many people by going to SCC who were from different places in the US or from Hispanic countries, at the leadership retreat I met a girl from Scandinavia that stayed in the same dorm room with me and was

interesting to hear about her country. Hearing and understanding about different customs and different cultures helps us to better understand and appreciate our own and other people's cultures, history, and the people themselves. Meeting people from various places grows our appreciation for the diversity of our planet, but meeting people with different personalities also helps us by growing our appreciation for the diversity of people personally. Knowing many different people teaches us how to relate to people from different cultures, who are different ages and who have different personalities, and grows our character as a result.

While some may view college as only an excuse to party all the time or as only a stepping stone in their path to a successful career, college means much more to me and should mean much more to others. College is an opportunity to expand our minds, experiences, character, and areas of expertise. It widens us and multiplies the facets of our understanding, enabling us to meet adult life with strength and maturity, whichever career we do choose. For me, college is not a stepping stone to a successful career; it is a stepping stone to a successful life.