

Video Title:	Overcoming Barriers – Parts One and Two
Video Length:	Part One – 24:19 minutes Part Two – 33:39 minutes
Audience:	Basic Studies Students, High School Students
Curriculum Correlation:	Transition Portfolio – Activity 5.c Videos
Part One Summary:	Viewers will listen to students discussing two important factors they face overcoming barriers to college success: money and family.
Part Two Summary:	Viewers will listen to students discussing a wide variety of barriers to college success and the solutions they found to overcome those barriers.
Vision Statement:	By watching this video, viewers will... LEARN about social, economic, personal and cultural barriers to college success, as well as a variety of strategies to address them; UNDERSTAND that college is a natural time of change and growth; FEEL uncomfortable about the barriers, but empowered to overcome them.
Learning Objectives:	LISTENING: Viewers will identify the common barriers to meeting educational goals and solutions to those barriers. SPEAKING: Viewers will share and compare information from the video and from personal experience. READING: Viewers will read sentences extracted from the video and select appropriate words to complete the sentences. WRITING: Viewers will practice note taking skills.

Instructional Time:	Pre-Viewing Activity – Discovery (Video Parts One and Two): Approximately 30 minutes Pre-Viewing Activity – Vocabulary (Video Part One): Approximately 1 hour Viewing Activity (Video Part One): Approximately 1 hour Pre-Viewing Activity – Vocabulary (Video Part Two): Approximately 1 hour Viewing Activity (Video Part Two): Approximately 1 hour Post-Viewing Activity (Video Parts One and Two): Approximately 1 hour
Answer Key:	Page 4
Video Transcripts:	Part One – Page 12 Part Two – Page 33

Instructional Guidelines

Overcoming Barriers is divided into two parts. It is possible to use Part One without Part Two; however, it's best not to use Part Two without using Part One first. Upon completing Overcoming Barriers – Part One, individual instructors will determine whether they will continue with the second part. If so, they should continue with the Pre-Viewing Activity – Vocabulary exercise for Overcoming Barriers – Part Two. If not, they should go directly to the Post-Viewing Activity.

Instructional Guidelines: Pre-Viewing Activities

- Instructor introduces the video (Parts One and Two) by asking students to think about and list the barriers that are currently preventing them from entering the educational program of their choice.
- Because this video has two parts, there are two Pre-Viewing Activity – Vocabulary handouts. Instructor distributes the appropriate handout and helps students complete the exercise. This can be done as dictionary work in class or at home, or through direct instruction. In a classroom with internet access, www.dictionary.com can be used.

Instructional Guidelines: Viewing Activity

- Instructor reviews note-taking skills.
- Instructor distributes Viewing Activity handout for Overcoming Barriers – Part One or Part Two as appropriate (both activities are attached). Instructor plays the video. The video may be played repeatedly until the students have successfully completed the note-taking charts and list.
- Instructor encourages students to compare their notes with a partner between and after video viewings.
- Instructor completes chart on overhead or computer projection with student input.

Instructional Guidelines: Post-Viewing Activity

- If only Overcoming Barriers – Part One is being used, the Post-Viewing Activity follows immediately after the Viewing Activity. However, if both Overcoming Barriers – Parts One and Two are used, it is important to complete both vocabulary and viewing activities before doing the Post-Viewing Activity.
- Instructor provides students with Post-Viewing Activity handout (attached) and asks students to review the list of barriers they created in the Pre-Viewing – Discovery Activity.
- Students are asked to copy those earlier listed barriers onto the Post Viewing Activity chart and to add any additional barriers that come to mind.
- Students are then encouraged to brainstorm solutions for each of their personal barriers.
- Guidance is provided as needed.

(Responses will vary.)

There are many barriers or obstacles people face when they decide to go to college. It is important to understand these barriers in order to be able to find ways to overcome them and find a successful path to educational success.

What are the barriers in your path to reaching your educational goals? Please write your barriers are lines below.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

You will hear the words on the left in the video that you will view. Please match each word on the left with its synonym on the right by writing the synonym in the space provided. The first has been done for you.

Match the synonyms without reading the sentences from the video. Read the sentences after you have finished. Does the synonym work in the sentence without changing the meaning of the sentence? If not, try again!

Ex.	Unique = <i>distinctive</i>	
1	Perspective = <i>point of view</i>	
2	Identify = <i>be classified</i>	be classified
3	Dynamic = <i>driving force</i>	complex
4	Impacts = <i>effects</i>	distinctive
5	Undermine = <i>weaken</i>	driving force
6	Balance = <i>stabilize</i>	effects
7	Commitments = <i>obligations</i>	inability
8	Complicated = <i>complex</i>	obligations
9	Failure = <i>inability</i>	point of view
10	Unwittingly = <i>without knowing</i>	stabilize
		weaken
		without knowing

Sentences from video:

- Ex. While all of us have a *unique* story, many of us share common themes, common successes and barriers.
1. It depends on your individual *perspective*.
 2. In fact, if you do some research, you will discover there are scholarships and other forms of funding for just about any group of people with which you can *identify*.
 3. & 4. Since every family *dynamic* is different, it is no wonder that families can have a wide variety of *impacts*.
 5. Some barriers may arrive as something seemingly insignificant, yet *undermine* all of the effort you are making toward your goal.
 6. & 7. She wanted to attend college but had no idea how to pay for college, let alone *balance* this with the other *commitments* in her life.
 8. Family plays a significant and *complicated* role in a student's decision to pursue college or university.
 9. So that's a huge barrier financially because of the *failure* to plan at the beginning, at the front end.
 10. Families can be a great source of support or can, *unwittingly*, create barriers for a potential student and their desire for higher education.

What barriers are mentioned in the video? Please write them below.

<i>Time</i>	<i>Language</i>	<i>Support</i>	<i>Readiness</i>
<i>Physical</i>	<i>Culture</i>	<i>Pressures</i>	
<i>Finances</i>	<i>Personality</i>	<i>Geography</i>	

Barrier or Solution?

Possible Barrier: **Money**

Possible Solutions:

- **Resources: financial aid, scholarships, family, work study, grants, loans**
- **Check: website, financial aid office, advisors, staff, faculty**
- **Apply! Don't deny yourself!**
- **Know the deadlines!**

Possible Barrier: **Family**

Possible Solutions:

- **Support – motivation, encouragement, emotional, financial**
- **Cultural and family value of education – family needs to understand the value of education**
- **Family can provide time and place to study**
- **Communication might relieve family pressure**

You will hear the sentences below in the video that you will view. Select a word from the box below to each group to complete the sentences. Use each word only once. The first has been done for you.

1. Finding a balance between the commitments you have to your education, your family and your work...is a significant issue and a problem we all face.
2. Finding a solution may be tricky.
3. What are your priorities in your life?
4. What would you be willing to delegate or say no to?
5. I'm like the poster child for procrastination. I wait until the last minute.
6. So, we just always assumed I was going to go to college.
7. Being a physically challenged person, I had to figure that out.

assumed	delegate	procrastination	physically challenged
balance	priorities	tricky	

8. Another big misconception is that people think since they've committed a crime or got into trouble in the past, that they're not able to get financial aid or able to get funding for school.
9. Stereotyping can play a significant role in creating hurdles that are difficult to see, but can have a major impact on students.
10. So sometimes having an accent implies certain levels of knowledge or lack of knowledge.
11. Their visas expired during the process of applying for citizenship.
12. They will point you in the direction of others who can help you too, like mentors and support groups.
13. I know I probably changed a whole lot, but it's so much a part of me, so much embedded into my routine, that I don't notice it.

embedded	hurdles	mentors
expired	implies	misconception

(Responses will vary.)

Below is a list of barriers or challenges mentioned in the video. Please list all the solutions the students have found to overcome them.

Barriers and Challenges:	Student Solutions:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time • Balance of Priorities • Motivation • Lacking Self Confidence • Feeling Alone • Taking Chances • Leaving Comfort Zone • Lacking time management skills • Getting in Trouble with the Law • Returning to School • Failing in School • Lacking Encouragement • Living in a New Culture • Learning a New Language • Lacking family support for education • Misinformation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Gave up job or reduced hours</i> • <i>Used Student Handbook to write tasks and manage time</i> • <i>Organized family support system</i> • <i>Stopped hanging out with some friends</i> • <i>Stopped “bad” or negative thoughts</i> • <i>Found resources to help</i> • <i>Found mentor</i> • <i>Built her own support group from advisors and friends</i> • <i>Focused on solutions instead of problems</i> • <i>Found and used resources</i> • <i>Spoke with everybody</i> • <i>Studied hard</i> • <i>Tried to be flexible</i> • <i>Learned patience</i> • <i>Communicated with family</i> • <i>Learned time management skills</i>

What campus resources were mentioned in the video?

1. **Childcare**
2. **Tutoring**
3. Computer access
4. **Work Study**
5. Cultural centers
6. **Women’s resource centers**
7. Back-to-work resources
8. **Veteran support**
9. Special needs
10. **People**

Myths or Stereotypes	
Name:	Definition
Perpetual Foreigner	<i>Having an accent implies lack of knowledge</i>
Sports	<i>Sports are the only way some students are going to get into college</i>
Model Minority	<i>All Asian/Pacific Islanders excel in school, value education, are at a higher socio-economic level, and have no barriers</i>

(Responses will vary.)

In the Pre-Viewing – Discovery Activity, you listed barriers in your personal path to reaching your educational goals. Now let’s think about solutions to those barriers by completing the chart below.

My Barriers:	My Solutions:

Narrator:

Walk onto any community college campus and you'll see students walking between classes, taking a momentary break, or maybe studying. Every one of them has a story. And every one of them has faced difficulty at some point in their journey – a journey that has brought them to higher education. But despite these difficulties, they are here, continuing on, getting an education, working to improve their lives. In this video you will hear the stories of students, instructors and advisors, all of whom have faced barriers of their own. Maybe you will identify with someone in this video. Or you may hear a story that is much like your own story. What is important to know is that as you face your own difficulties, you are not alone. While all of us have a unique story, many of us share common themes, common successes and common barriers. Hearing how others solved or overcame their barriers, you may find the beginning of a solution for dealing with whatever barriers you may be facing. As you listen to these stories, it is our hope you will find comfort, support, and even inspiration.

Barriers come in all forms. Some are obvious; others are hidden. Some barriers may arrive as something seemingly insignificant, yet undermine all of the effort you are making toward your goal. Other barriers can be handled quickly and effortlessly, even though they look to be insurmountable at first.

There are an unlimited number of issues that can be considered barriers: time, culture, physical barriers. Others include finances, language differences, geographic barriers. How ready are you for higher education? Are you shy or outgoing? What type of support do you have? Are you returning to school later in life? Are you trying to take on too much at one time? What types of pressures do you have on you as you are trying to attend college? All of these things can stand in the way of your education.

As we begin this journey to understand barriers, remember a couple things. Not all barriers are the same; challenges for one person may be inspiration for another. You are not alone or the first person to face these barriers. Hearing the stories of others facing similar difficulties will hopefully point you in the direction of a solution. There is always support on the campus of the school you will hopefully attend. You may have to do a little looking, but there are people at every school who want you to succeed and will help you in every way they can. And, understand that college is a natural time of change and growth.

In Part One of this video on overcoming barriers, we are going to look at two important factors: money and family. Both can be seen as inspiration, and both can be barriers. It depends on your individual perspective.

We'll start with money. If you are thinking about going to college, the first question that may occur to you is, "How am I going to pay for college?"

Anh Hua (Student):

My family cannot support my tuition here, so I applied for financial aid and the South Seattle Foundation scholarship.

Paul Ung (Graduate):

I was lucky enough that my work – working for my dad – helped me provide enough money to pay for community college.

Laura Molina (Parent):

We didn't have that money at home. I was trying to feed three kids, and I just couldn't do that.

Long Ngo (Graduate):

We all got to go through the rough times, and sometimes we just can't afford it.

Jonathan Girmatzion (Student):

So, one obstacle was looking for resources to pay for school.

Maria Lopez (Graduate):

The challenges that I found was not being able to understand the financial aid process. It was very difficult at the beginning and I always thought I was going to end up with this huge debt, everybody always say you're going to end up with hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Linda Graham (Student):

Not having support, not having money, not having the means of transportation even –

Aisha Gordon (Student):

I know part of the issue that I see with a lot of my friends and my friends' children, and just people in general, is where is the money to go to school? How am I going to pay for my education when I come from a single-parent family? You know, it's not like my mother is going to have the money to pay for college for me.

Narrator:

Aisha is like many students. She wanted to attend college but had no idea of how to pay for college, let alone balance this with the other commitments in her life.

Aisha Gordon:

Well, I had to think a lot about time and financial things because I have a son. So, I wasn't exactly sure how that was going to work as far as spending time with my son, having time to work, and go to school and do my homework.

Vincent Beardsley (Student):

Um, I was a little bit...it was the basic nervousness of not knowing exactly how things were going to work. That, and, uh, it was just sort of a leap of faith, in a way.

Narrator:

Vincent had similar concerns.

Vincent Beardsley:

I had heard stories from other people who had been on financial aid, and they were able to support themselves and their family. But before I had... A few years back when I had gotten a phone call from one of the guys at North Seattle. He had said that both him and his wife had gone back to school at the same time, and they had a child that they were raising. And they were able to support the both of them going through school with financial aid. That, in itself, gave me a lot of hope.

Narrator:

As Huy Nguyen will tell you, take that leap of faith. Don't let the question of funding stop you from pursuing a higher education.

Huy Nguyen (Student):

When you start college, you don't ever afraid if you don't have the money to go to school. There are funding. There are resources that will help you on the way. If you have trouble with that, come talk to supervisor, advisor, faculties on campus. They'll show you the way to overcome, they will show you. They try to find a way of helping you get through that difficulty. And they're very supportive.

Narrator:

A number of resources are available to help fund your higher education. There are scholarships, financial aid, grants, and loans; plus, there is work study available on campus. You can find information about these options on the website for any college or university or by visiting the campus of any higher education institution. Ask someone like college instructor Bob Dela-Cruz, and he will tell you they'll work hard to find you funding.

Bob Dela-Cruz (South Seattle Community College Instructor):

Academics at the community college is so, so significant, so important because it is available to everybody. The community college is there for all of us within the community, regardless of your financial situation, regardless of your family background. You have the opportunity, students have the opportunity to come here and then to get into academics and find out if this is what they like. And now, once you have that, you have so many opportunities, so many options which you wouldn't have if you only had your high school diploma.

Nicole Alefai (Student):

Like you can just get like a scholarship just for being, just for being your ethnicity. For saying 'I'm Samoan' – I can get a scholarship just for saying that. Like they...schools want you if you have an ethnicity or a cultural background, they want you to come to their school. 'We want you to come to our school.' So just saying 'I have brown eyes'—there's all these really random scholarships. You just got to find them. They're everywhere.

Francesca Maipi (Student):

Even for being a girl and going to college...they'll give you a scholarship for that.

Narrator:

In fact, if you do some research, you will discover there are scholarships and other forms of funding for just about any group of people with which you can identify. Common themes for scholarships might be academic achievement and goals,, talent as an athlete, your ability in fine arts and even your culture or ethnic background.

While some students may not feel they need any financial help, it is important for every student to consider all the resources available to them.

Stephen Coates-White (South Seattle Community College Advisor):

For financial aid, sometimes I'll have student tell me, 'Oh, I'm not going to apply for financial aid because my family makes too much money' or 'We're just going to pay out of pocket.' Things happen, life changes, and a parent or a spouse might lose their job, and you may need financial aid at some point in that time that you're studying here during that year. So, I always say, 'Apply anyway. Let someone else deny you or tell you that you don't have an award coming to you.' Or, I'll have students who say, 'I'm not going to apply for that scholarship because I don't think I'm worthy.' But I say, 'But student, what if you did apply, and they did award you?' 'Well, that means I could do this, this and this.' And so, let others deny you. Do the things that you can control and then let others take a look at it, and you might be pleasantly surprised that you do get something – an award, maybe a scholarship, something. But if you don't even participate or choose not to do it, you're denying yourself. And so, it's really important, I think, just to take the time and energy to do those things that you're considering because they might pay off for you.

Narrator:

And this type of funding is available at smaller private universities, too.

Jason Moy (Seattle University, Assistant Director of Undergraduate Admissions):

That's something a lot of students will just not even look at Seattle University or other private schools because they look at our initial tuition costs and get scared off a little bit. The good news is that we do offer a lot of scholarships and financial aid to transfer students here at

Seattle University. The good news is that we offer two transfer scholarships that we award year-round.

Narrator:

And once you've found the important funding you need, be sure to keep on top of deadlines.

Teri Eguchi (South Seattle Community College Advisor):

So many times we see students who apply late. Their financial aid hasn't been completed yet. They're in school, and they're hoping that everything gets straightened out, and it's not going to interfere. But often times it's because they don't end up being eligible, it *does* interfere with their education, and they have to drop out, or they're not able to continue. So that's a huge barrier financially because of the failure to plan at the beginning, at the front end.

Narrator:

Any number of students will tell you that if you take the risk to find the funding, it will be worth it. Just ask Aisha Gordon.

Aisha Gordon:

For a few years there, before I decided to come to college and everything, I didn't really do much. And, for me, knowing every day I have something to get up and get out of bed and go do – that makes me, at the end of the day, feel like I've accomplished something. It's huge.

Narrator:

One of Aisha's biggest motivators for going to college is her son. She knows a college education will help to provide for her son and set a good example for him.

Family plays a significant and complicated role in a student's decision to pursue college or university.

Geni Sheikh (Student):

I just want to add that families really support to the students. And if you're a mother, and you have a husband, your husband is the number one support who can help. If your wife is going to school, don't just think like, 'Oh, she's going to school.' She's really going through a lot. She needs the support from you.

Xavier Maipi (Francesca's Father):

The typical Micronesian family does not have that on its priority list, talking about education, college at home.

Sochetna Chhay (Student):

I know since I was young that I have to go to school to the end, till I cannot go any more, so I

can have a better future.

Apasara Jitviriyanon (Graduate):

I think for the family part, support on an emotional and understanding about they have to study hard. And like, what I say, give them some time to study and provide some space for study that is... It will help a lot.

Peterson Chum (Student):

My family supported me in many ways throughout this whole process, financially, emotionally and it's been a great experience.

Ilhan Wheliye (Student):

For me, it wasn't ... There's no obligation besides just going to school with my parents. Ever since they got here, it's just like 'school, school, school.' When I got older, I had to learn how to balance things out – like going to work, going to school and how to get up there. That was just the obstacle that I went through.

Connie Maipi (Francesca's Mother):

For many families, Pacific Island families, it is already pre-decided what your position is going to be in the family and even what your family's position is in relationship to other families or clans on your islands. And so there are certain families that are considered the leaders, and it's expected that their children will be leaders. And then you have other families where they are not expected to become educated and become more than what, basically a cast system in a way. They're not expected to be more than what every person in their family had been in the past.

Ikran Ismail (Student):

I think, for me, one of the biggest obstacles was my family. I felt like, for me, I had a responsibility to be a sister, a cousin... to be a niece... and I'd always let my problems at home get to my education.

Sokunthea Kong (Graduate):

I had to ask my husband for advice and he suggest me to get a short course, called nursing assistant, because I always wanted to be a nurse when I was young. So, he's always there to advise me, to support me financially and also take care of my kids while I was at school and that kind of helped me, motivate me.

Damaris Valdez (Student):

I think one of the struggles for me was having the support of my family. They didn't quite understand why I wanted to go to college. It was more important for my mom to see me

graduating from high school because she didn't finish high school. And so she was like 'just finish high school' and then that was it. That was the only conversation we had.

Patrick Torres (Graduate and South Seattle Community College Math Instructor):

I'd say that it was my parents that really helped me a lot in going to college because they wanted me to focus on school a hundred percent. And without their support, I don't know if I could even make it.

Sy Ear (South Seattle Community College Advisor):

It's a family expectation that we go to college. And that's instilled into our behavior, our future thinking. It's instilled by my parents, because my dad is a high school teacher, so I didn't really have a choice. I had to go to college.

Francesca Maipi:

They might want to go to school, but there's a lot of family pressure sometimes to find a job and send money back to them because they really need it or want the money.

Narrator:

We all know families play a significant role in our lives. Since every family dynamic is different, it is no wonder that families can have a wide variety of impacts. Families can be a great source of support or can, unwittingly, create barriers for a potential student and their desire for higher education. Sometimes they can be both at the same time.

Tram Dang (South Seattle Community College Instructor):

We're originally from Vietnam, and I have five people in my family. We came to the United States in 1988, but we left Vietnam in 1986. So after the war, the 80s was a very difficult time in Vietnam, very low resources, limited resources, so everyone was trying to get out of the country.

So, I started the third grade here. And I was, during elementary school, middle school, I was a very motivated student. I did really well. But when I got to high school, I didn't do too well. I wanted to... I didn't have a good time in high school. I was trying to take AP classes and doing Running Start, way more than I should have. And so it was really overwhelming and I didn't do well and it kind of spiraled down. But the whole time when I was struggling with school, I didn't really tell my parents much about it. So they didn't know, they just thought she's doing fine. She's always a good student. Things like that. And so my Dad was really, really in shock. I can still remember the day when I told him. I was the oldest so they expected that she would have to go through college and get a really good degree otherwise her siblings would not follow in her footsteps, things like that.

I think, like, sometimes you feel like it's too overwhelming and you feel like you don't know if

you can do it. I think it helps to have people who say we're here to support you and to give you the help, so do what you can and let us know where you're failing and then we can have the support to help you.

Narrator:

Counselor Stephen Coates-White has had many discussions with students regarding the pressures that family can add.

Stephen Coates-White:

I just wanted to go back to family expectations as well. I think that's another big barrier because when we're talking about life balance and being the superhero like I was mentioning – it really means having some pretty hard conversations sometimes and not necessarily discounting what family expectations are, but listening to those and also engaging family in what you're doing on campus and sharing some of your own needs or what you're able to do and not able to do. And those are really hard conversations just in respect to culture and some family values and other types of things. So, I would encourage students not to shy away from those hard conversations, but to engage in them because in part of that process, at least you can potentially find some solutions with family and maybe even inviting family in and being part of what you're doing on campus so that they can see the importance. I think it's something that I would highly recommend.

Narrator:

While it may not be easy to achieve for some, the student, receiving the support of their family, will play a large role in the student's success in college.

Teri Eguchi:

The importance of support from their families – emotional support – knowing that this is tough being in school. It takes a lot of energy, and they need to be cheered on every once in a while to hang in there. Times get tough. If families can understand that and be there for them, cut them a little slack sometimes, maybe they're not going to get all their chores done, but they're studying for a test. Make sure they have a nice, quiet place to study. Become involved, as much as their student will allow them to in what they're learning. And the deadlines – financial aid deadlines – and try to be supportive making sure that you're providing the information that they may need so that they're going to be able to go to school. So, it's finding ways to help out even though maybe they have not gone to school themselves before and this is the first time someone in their family is, but there's so many ways that they can be there for their student, letting them know that they believe in them and that they're there for them, rooting for them all the way.

Narrator:

If you are facing an issue, and it is placing a barrier between you and your success at college or

making you think twice about pursuing higher education, you will find resources on most campuses to help you with these issues. They may be counselors, instructors, or they may be fellow students. Chances are the seeds to a solution are there for you.

In Part Two of Overcoming Barriers, we will look at other situations that pose difficulties for students, like language differences, lack of good role models, and poor educational background, and ways that students have overcome those barriers to be successful.



Narrator:

You may be in the midst of making a decision to pursue higher education, or you could be signed up for classes and are about to begin your college career. Or, you might be in the middle of your college path. It is very likely you've faced barriers along your journey. We all do.

In this video you will hear about the challenges others have faced and how they have overcome the barriers they've faced. This is part two of two videos called Overcoming Barriers. In part one we heard about the challenges many students face in trying to afford higher education. We also heard how families can be a fundamental support for students but can also create some barriers that make going to college or university more difficult.

In this video, part two, we will look at other difficulties students may face and hear how others have overcome these challenges and how, despite these difficulties, they are continuing with their education, working to improve their lives.

Let's first take a look at some common barriers all of us face from time to time: Time, Balance of Priorities, Motivation, Self Confidence, Feeling Alone, Taking Chances and Leaving the Comfort Zone.

Geni Sheikh (Student):

I was working, and I was going to school at the same time, but I had to make a decision to give up which one I wanted. There's a lot of mothers are thinking, 'I don't want to give up my work.' I give up my work.

Jonathan Girmatzion (Student):

I had to consider, personally, I had to consider the time, financial resources and just getting back to the routine.

Apasara Jitviriyanon (Graduate):

When I entering into the Nursing program, my husband got job, so I can reduce my work schedule and stay focused in the school.

Sekani Perkins (Student):

I would have to say time management. It's such a fast-paced environment. You have to kind of manage your time more wisely. That's basically it.

Long Ngo (SSCC Graduate/IT Systems Specialist):

Two years, three years, four years college ... You think, let's see, you think four years from now is a very, very long time. But, you starting taking class, you turn around, a quarter's gone.

Aisha Gordon (Student):

Well, I had to think a lot about time and financial things because I have a son. So, I wasn't exactly sure how that was going to work as far as spending time with my son, having time to work, and go to school and do my homework.

Narrator:

Time. Finding a balance between the commitments you have to your education, your family and your work. This is a significant issue and a problem we all face. Finding a solution may be tricky. Without discovering a solution we risk consequences that force an undesirable outcome.

Stephen Coates-White (SSCC Advisor):

So often when individuals are coming in to go to school, or come back to school, or reinvent themselves in some way, they often have the mentality of Wonder Woman or Superman, like a superhero. They're coming in and they're thinking, 'I'm going to be able to take classes, be a parent, go to work, do all of the things that I've always been able to do, and I'm going to do with a smile on my face. And in fact, as we know, it doesn't always work out that way. Balance is so important because so often we end up taking, or students end up taking, on so many different things. And one of the things that I try to do when I work with a student is to really talk about that and ask them, 'What are your priorities in your life? What would you be willing to delegate or say no to?' Particularly, those are difficult questions because, as we know, culture, and economics, and family, and expectations, all of these things come into play just around life balance. And so, asking them to think more deeply about those bigger questions can help them maybe prevent a disaster down the line, or prevent them from... or not addressing balance might prevent them from not being successful with their goal and what they want to achieve.

Narrator:

When Janice Young began attending Community College, she and her two sisters were already working at the family's restaurant. As the first in her family to attend college, she became a role model to her sisters, who soon followed.

Colleen Young (Student):

We're really flexible with the schedule. Because, like, let's say if Janice couldn't work, then maybe I would take over, or Angela would take over. So, we're pretty flexible with each other's schedules. And, you know, we let each other know, 'Okay, this day I can't work' or, you know, 'Can you work for me?' So, I think communication is just the most important part about it, is because then we can all kind of work with each other and it makes it easier on all of us, you know, especially my parents. Because they always worry about 'Okay, who's going to work, who's going to work,' you know?

Narrator:

There are resources for you at your school to help you look at decisions regarding priorities. But sometimes, a solution is as simple as learning time management techniques.

Sekani Perkins:

I started using the Student Handbook. I started organizing my day-to-day tasks and that helped me out a tremendous amount. So, that was basically it. I still fall off to the wayside, but then I go into my student handbook, and I kind of try to remember certain things that I was supposed to do in a day, and that helps me out. But time management, that's my thing because sometimes I'm like the poster child for procrastination. I wait until the last minute. So that's my thing.

Teri Eguchi (SSCC Advisor):

We see so many students, I think we all do, at the beginning, or certainly once they start having problems in managing their time, trying to do so many things well, and not doing any because they are stretched so thin – whether it's family or studies or work – and feeling really overwhelmed by that. And so, I'm meeting with them and trying to help them learn time management techniques, whether it's something like using a planner, a calendar, writing down all that needs to be done and taking a look at how this is going to work or fit within a twenty-four-hour-day period. So often times, this is the first time that it's really been looked at.

Narrator:

Some issues around time can be solved by knowing there are resources that provide you with more time.

Geni Sheikh:

For me, it's like I have to have childcare because I have four kids. And I try to do it without the help of childcare – me and my husband help each other switch shifts – and it was really hard for me to finish.

Muslima Kedir (Student):

For me, going to school wasn't the problem. It's *staying* in school that's the issue. Because once you start, and you have an issue with childcare, being a mother, a wife, student and working is tough. So in the beginning, it might be okay, but then you're going to have some ups and downs. It gets harder as you go. And you have kids who get sick, you can't miss your classes, sometimes you just want to drop everything and be like, 'I'm done.'

Narrator:

As Geni and Muslima discovered, many schools have the resources to help students with a wide variety of needs. These include offering on-campus childcare and even preschool, in some cases. Other on-campus services include tutoring, computer access, work study, cultural

centers, women's resource centers, back-to-work resources, veteran support, special needs and much more.

Todd Couture (Graduate):

Well, I am physically challenged. I've got cerebral palsy. So, because of that, I've always thought that I had to be educated to make something of myself in the world. So, I don't even think it was really a question once I started school. So, we just always assumed I was going to go to college.

Narrator:

Todd is a source of pride for his family.

Laura Molina (Todd's Mother):

Well, Todd is the first to graduate. Yes, yes, yeah, so I'm very proud of him. It was quite an accomplishment and a bumpy road sometimes...and many times.

Narrator:

Todd assembled a support team, a mix of family and college resources, and achieved success despite the challenges.

Todd Couture:

Actually the biggest one was getting from class to class. Being a physically challenged person, I had to figure that out. And Roxanne Tillman, who works here, was working at the time with disabled students, and she got me a scooter to ride around campus from class to class, which actually did a very good job of getting me where I needed to be on time. Otherwise, getting from one class to another, I couldn't have done that within ten minutes or whatever the time frame is. So, that was one big issue that I did have to accomplish here.

And my grandparents were there as well, when Mom had to work. They were kind of used as daycare. So, when she had to go to work, I was transported to their house, and they took over the responsibilities of transportation and whatnot when she was at work. So, it was an entire family kind of affair.

Narrator:

Support is fundamental to success in school. You will find support in many forms on the college campus, even if you aren't getting support from the people you are close to.

Sia Sagaio (Student):

For me, because of the course I wanted to stay on and everything, I had to stop hanging around with a couple of friends because if I kept following down the same path they were going, I wasn't going to get to where I am right now which is in college, my second year, pretty much

explaining everything I want to do...get my word out and everything.

Fonci Richardson (Graduate):

That I think a lot of people's experiences just maybe having lack of support. Lack of support, I think, is key with returning students. Because of the sacrifices, you know, you need a few people around you that are supporting what you're trying to do. It doesn't have to be a village, but if you have like two to three people in your corner support while you are doing this, going through the process, I think it makes it a lot better. So, that would be an obstacle, having a lack of support, I think. And then again, for me, that was my personal barrier.

Narrator

Personal barriers come in all shapes and sizes.

Huy Nguyen (Student):

When I first came here, I used to have all the negative thoughts like, 'I'm useless. I'm nobody at all. I don't fit in anywhere. I cannot do anything. I cannot accomplish anything.' All of those are bad, bad thoughts. You have to stop that. When you think about it, stop and say, say to yourself, 'Okay think about what you have done so far.'

Jonathan Girmatzion:

Another big misconception is that people think since they've committed a crime or got into trouble in the past, that they're not able to get financial aid or able to get any funding for school. That's not true. There's many opportunities to get it, it's just that they're discouraged by the people outside the educational system.

Vi Nguyen (Student):

Anh and I, at first like we were very afraid to talk to strangers, and we hesitate to go somewhere alone, so we usually went there together. But like after a few months, we feel much more confident.

Sekani Perkins:

My experience was probably different from a lot of others. Seventeen different schools, like I said. My mom wasn't in the military ... was on drugs, moved around a lot. What I noticed about all the schools was the lack of patience from the teachers. You know, they would rush you through.

Fonci Richardson:

One of the biggest things for me was an obstacle as a returning student because you're, I think because you put yourself on the back burner, you forget what your strengths were, you know, what you were good at. So as a process coming back to school, you are learning and getting touch with some of these things again.

Abdul Rahman Mohamud (Student):

I didn't do very good at high school. I used to, you know, skip classes, do all that stuff. I went to four or five different high schools by the time from junior year to senior year, and I didn't end up finishing high school.

Alana Crisostomo (Student):

I've never had anyone tell me that I was a good writer. I'm twenty years old right now, and ever since elementary school, middle school, high school, no one's ever told me I was a good writer. And I came here and I had Holly Gilman as a teacher, and she was like, 'So, when you write your first book, my name better be in it.' And I was like, 'Okay!'

Sara Stubbs (Senior Admissions Counselor, University of Washington):

I grew up in Alaska and went to straight to college after I graduated from high school. I went to upstate New York. And it was a huge transition, a lot more difficult than I thought it was going to be, different culture and really tough academically.

Narrator:

Attending college is a big change. As Sara said, it is especially difficult when the change is more than just starting college classes. Imagine coming from another culture and speaking another language.

Thippavanh Bounyasith (Student):

First quarter of my study is really difficult for me to learn English and learn all the parts of the airplane. I have to read and read and read and try to understand and look at the engine part and the picture from the book and compare with the part of the engine.

Geni Sheikh:

For me, it's ... I always wanted higher education at the back of my head. But where I came from the civil war happened, so I couldn't finish university. And I came here, but I couldn't come at school because I was a refugee, and I didn't have anybody to help me, and I didn't speak the language when I came here.

Huy Nguyen:

I was like, 'Man, if I have to talk with ten Americans, I would talk with them!' You throw me out there, speak English, I'll speak English with you! And it's a fun thing. I never thought learning new language would be this fun, especially just talking.

Narrator:

Jing had no idea community colleges existed when she arrived from Thailand, or that she would soon attend one. Now a nurse at a major Seattle children's medical center, she makes sure her friends back home know.

Aspara “Jing” Jitviriyanon:

When I come to USA, I had no idea when I came here. I don’t know anything about the community college. But when I explain to them what kind of college that you can do in your life, and upgrade your life, they like, ‘Oh, this is great. This is like another opportunity to do great things in your future.’ And I think that more students, they know by now that, okay, they have this kind of help for you to, like, assist, and it’s really good resources.

Narrator:

For some who have arrived, hoping for a better life that includes education, concerns back home may prevent them from considering or continuing college. Many of them will never return to higher education.

Emma Schuster (Student):

I think for Samoans, or any other Pacific Islanders, the importance of children is definitely... it could cause a barrier to higher education. In terms of when your parents are here, or when they’re back home, they expect you to just work for them and work and earn the labor to support the family.

Francesca Maipi (Student):

So, it’s easier for them just to come to the States just to find a job and not, like, educate themselves more. They don’t realize that if you come here you can get like a minimum wage job and they can send that money back, but they don’t realize that they can get an education and get an even better job and, like, live well here and are able to send money back as well.

Teri Eguchi:

That family, in many cultures, is so critical, so key. You know, it’s central, and you don’t want to create any kind of barriers within your family. On the other hand, I really strongly feel that each person, if they want to be in school, even though their family doesn’t support that or doesn’t share that value, but if that individual values education and wants that for themselves, I will be very supportive of them. I will provide that support for them and understanding what that’s going to mean in dealing with their family, too.

Narrator:

There are many other difficulties that can compound the stresses a student can face. Stereotyping can play a significant role in creating hurdles that are difficult to see, but can have a major negative impact on students. Mark Mitsui, President of North Seattle Community College and an educator, explains.

Mark Mitsui (President, North Seattle Community College):

There’s no such thing as a positive stereotype, and I think that’s an important element that we really need to let people know about.

Narrator:

And stereotyping comes in many forms.

Mark Mitsui:

Stereotypes and community college students, particularly Asian/Pacific Islander students, that are important to be aware of include the 'perpetual foreigner' stereotype and how that can impact students, especially students that are non-native English speaking. So sometimes having an accent implies certain levels of knowledge or lack of knowledge.

Another myth that is important to realize are some of the myths that impact the Pacific Islander population, and some of the stereotypes. And we have heard, some of our Samoan students, for example, say that as they were going through the K-12 system, the public school system, they would get messages from people in positions of authority that they needed to turn out for the football team, wrestle. The impression was that was the only way they were going to get to college.

Narrator:

Then there's the Model Minority Myth.

Mark Mitsui:

So the model minority myth implies that Asian/Pacific Islanders all excel at school, the families all value education, particularly higher education, understand higher education, are of a higher socioeconomic status, and don't struggle in the school system, and don't encounter barriers.

The research is beginning to show that, is beginning to debunk the model minority myth, and we're beginning to see data that shows that the Asian/Pacific Islander community is not monolithic. It's not uniform. We are not all high academically achieving, wealthy families and individuals. So, as an example, forty percent of the students, Asian/Pacific Islander students, in higher education are in the community and technical college system.

Narrator:

These stereotypes can have broad impacts, especially when they become part of a larger institution.

Mark Mitsui:

Stereotypes also impact service delivery and where resources for services go. If an institution believes that Asian/Pacific Islander students don't have any problems, then you'll see fewer specialized outreach and support services made available to Asian/Pacific Islander students. I work very hard to break that stereotype. Throughout my academic career, I was quite successful. I think that it's something that impacts students in a negative way when the expectations are out there and they're external and they're not, they don't fit the individual.

Vaeomatoka "Toka" Valu (University of Washington Advisor):

I am an outreach and admissions counselor/Pacific Island recruitment coordinator.

Narrator:

Meet Toka.

Vaeomatoka "Toka" Valu:

I was born in Vaiola Hospital, which is the only hospital on the main island of Tonga.

Narrator:

Toka and his mom came to the United States on visitors' visas. Their visas expired during the process of applying for citizenship.

Vaeomatoka "Toka" Valu:

So, because my mom was single for the first fourteen years of my life, she has done a great deal of just being both mom and dad. And so, in that case, she's done a lot of telling me what I need to be doing, what I need to be doing to get ready for college. And all of that, including when we got here, she tried to explain to me that we are illegal residents. That's the way she put it, 'We are illegal residents in this country. We can be sent home if we are caught.'

Narrator:

Because of his status and the time it took for citizenship to be realized, Toka had to delay attending college for two years.

Vaeomatoka "Toka" Valu:

And I'm thinking, 'Wow, if I had my papers, I'd be in school right now! I'd be doing this and that.'

Narrator:

Toka is quick to say he should have taken more advantage of the resources available.

Vaeomatoka "Toka" Valu:

What I would have done differently, had it been today, is to find the resources out there. A lot of different community organizations have people who are connected to universities. The Ethnic Cultural Center has resources for that here at UW. So, the thing is, we want them to get into school right away so that they are filling their time with something constructive. At the same time, there's definitely resources out there.

Narrator:

Just knowing there are resources and to seek them out is the most important step to overcoming barriers. This is important for students who are the first generation in a family to

attend higher education. They don't have parents or brothers and sisters to help guide them.

Vi Nguyen:

When I come here, like all of us, we didn't know anything about American college system, the culture, so I have to start everything at zero.

Nicole Alefaio (Student):

Sometimes it's difficult because like if I don't know what to expect or I don't know like where to go for help or something. Then it's difficult just because they don't really know how to help me.

Linda Graham (Student):

And the resources I had to find, which I started by getting a scholarship through the SEA (Seattle Education Access). And they helped me out with doing my financial aid and things like that because I didn't have my family, really, to help me out with obtaining those things because I'm first generation.

Jason Moy (Seattle University, Assistant Director of Undergraduate Admissions):

For many first-generation students, particularly if you grew up in a multi-lingual household, if English is your second language, and you indicate that on your application, we will usually require proof of English proficiency, which can trip up some students. And that can usually be satisfied with a TOEFL or IELTS. If you went to high school here in the United States, that can usually satisfy it as well.

Narrator:

You'll find resources to help you with these barriers to education on a college campus. Many of these resources are people, people who understand, people who have overcome these difficulties themselves.

Stephen Coates-White:

I was a first-generation college student, and I didn't have a lot of family that had the insider experience to be able to share with me about going to school. And, so that was a big barrier because I didn't know the culture. I didn't know the rules. I didn't know what to expect or have anyone really to talk to me about that. So that was the first thing, being a first-generation college student.

Teri Eguchi:

I was also a first-generation college student, and I attended my first year right out of high school to a large university that I was not prepared for.

Narrator:

They will support you and help you find solutions. They will point you in the direction of others

who can help support you too, like mentors and support groups.

Stephen Coates-White:

To me, mentorship is something that's really important, being able to establish relationships with people who kind of know what you are going through, or who have the experience that you might not have yourself.

Teri Eguchi:

And I also, like Stephen, found a mentor in one of my professors, and that really was a very big changing moment for me, I mean, suddenly, someone took an interest in me. Somebody kind of showed they believed in what I was doing, and I started believing that myself, and it really provided me with a lot more focus.

Sia Sagaio:

But then, my sophomore year, there was a police officer. He saw me get into trouble again, as usual, and then he had me hang around with him every day. And then he told me to join this PA club, which is basically people who want to learn how to become a police officer and whatnot. And once I started joining the club, I started to realize, I started to get a different view of why school is important.

Ikran Ismail (Student):

I think one advice I would like to give to people that I've used for myself is getting a support group. Finding people in your community, in your workplace, at school, that can help you succeed because not a lot of us have that at home. And so, to balance that out, I get my support from school. I get it from advisors. I get it from friends.

Ilhan Wheliye (Student):

Make sure you have a mentor. Mentors are very important. I had mine in high school. I had a mentor throughout high school until college and she pushes me. She does so much for me.

Narrator:

No one will tell you that overcoming the barriers that stand in the way of your education, in the way of your success, is easy. But almost anyone on a college campus will tell you that there are resources available to help. You just need to know they exist and to seek them out.

Stephen Coates-White:

And then, the big thing is success, right? Success looks so differently for different students. And so, we get into this habit of comparing ourselves. 'It was so easy for so and so or my best friend or my brother. It was so easy. Why isn't it as easy for me?' And the thing that we have to hang on to is that success does look different, and we respond differently to different situations. And

so, what is easy for one person may not be so easy for another. And so, tapping into those resources to help make it easier, I think, is really, really essential.

Long Ngo:

Patience. Patience probably will help you in any case, I guess. I think if you have patience enough, you will find answer for most of the obstacles. Pretty much everything, you've got to find resources and based on that, you make decisions. Just going back to patience. You've got patience; you will find the answer.

Narrator:

And it is worth taking the time to overcome these barriers.

Gregory Alvarado (SSCC Graduate/Staff):

I felt like if I was going to continue in school, if I was going to continue with higher education, that I, in a sense, needed to change my identity. As I came on to school and became more involved, I think I started talking with more people like myself, I started finding other people who I identified with, and I kind of broke that barrier for myself because I feel like instead of separating myself or separating my identity from my education, I found a way to incorporate it.

Abdul Rahman Mohamud:

College changed me a lot. Like, if you were to see me when I first started college, you probably wouldn't even recognize me because I wasn't used to a life of school, you know. My life was a lot different. I'd say it changed me in the sense of making me more, like, grown.

Muslima Kadir:

I'm very happy. It was a long ride, and that ride's about to end, so I'm very happy. No regrets at all. It was hard, but it was worth it at the end.

Patrick Torres (SSCC Graduate/Math Faculty):

My education really helped me to grow independently, become more mature.

Ilhan Wheliye:

I know it's not easy. It's very difficult. I'm not going to lie. But in the end, it pays off. Like when I got my diploma, I was like happy.

Maria Lopez (Graduate):

For me the value that I take from my career is that I can help all these students that are struggling now, not only with the subject of my expertise, but with the language. In all of the programs I was in, I was the only one. Hispanic.

Fonci Richardson:

I think I'm just at the better place where instead of looking at the obstacles, I am going to look at it as, 'Ok, it's an obstacle. Okay I am looking for solution now.' I am not concentrating on obstacles like I did before because I see the opportunities that are ahead of me.

Sekani Perkins:

One thing I have to say about change is you personally, you don't see it. The people around you see it. I know I probably changed a whole lot, but it's so much a part of me, so much embedded into my routine, that I don't notice it. This is just what I do.

Narrator:

Start here, go anywhere.

(Vietnamese)

Long Ngo:

Start here, go anywhere.

Huy Nguyen:

Everybody – start here, go anywhere.