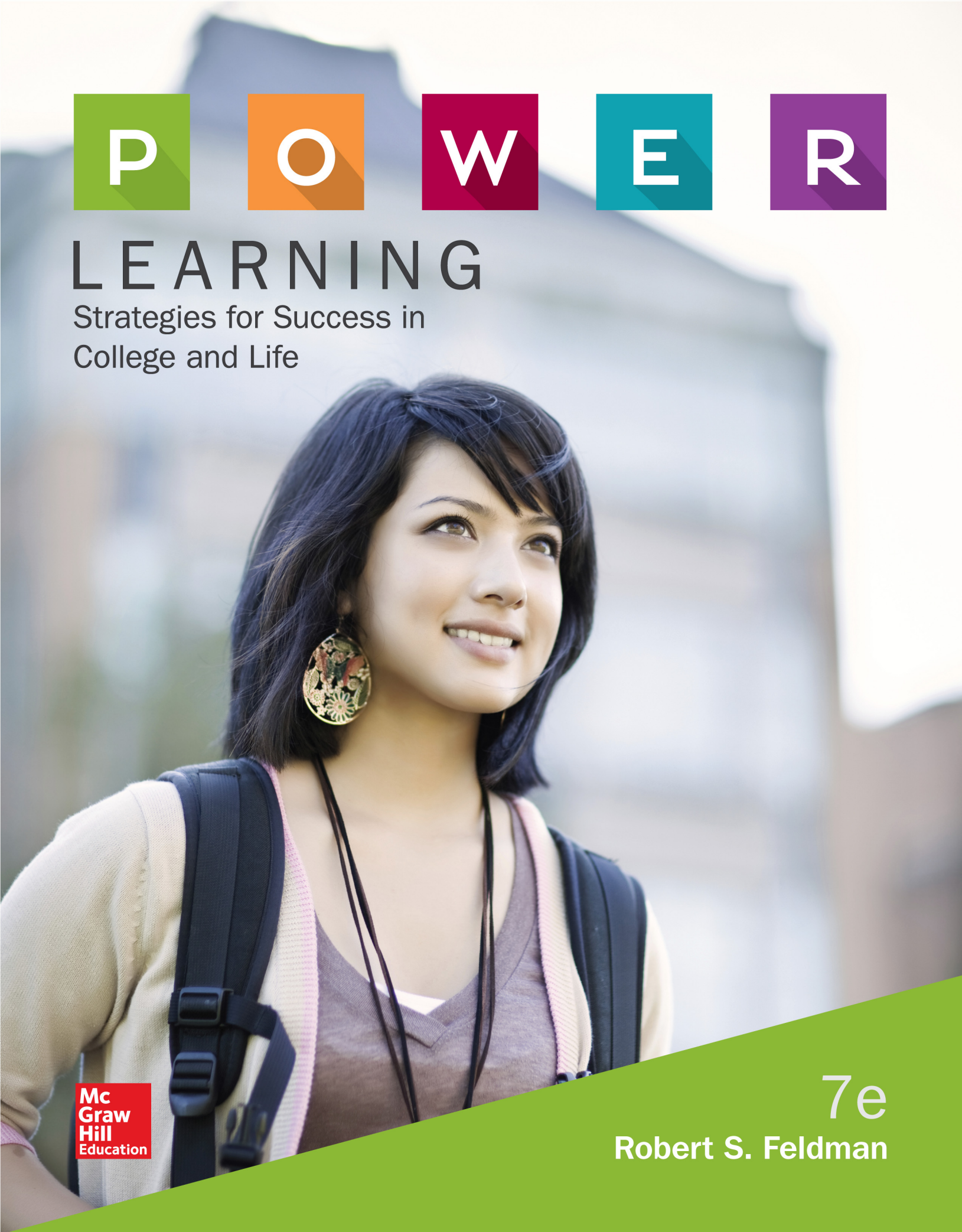
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Strategies for Success in College and Life

SEVENTH EDITION

Robert S. Feldman
University of Massachusetts Amherst

Mc Graw Hill Education

P.O.W.E.R. LEARNING: STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS IN COLLEGE AND LIFE, SEVENTH EDITION

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Dedication

To my students, who make teaching a joy.

About the Author

ROBERT S. FELDMAN

Bob Feldman still remembers those moments of being overwhelmed when he started college at Wesleyan University. "I wondered whether I was up to the challenges that faced me," he recalls, "and—although I never would have admitted it at the time—I really had no idea what it took to be successful at college."

That experience, along with his encounters with many students during his own teaching career, led to a life-long interest in helping students navigate the critical transition that they face at the start of their own college careers. Professor Feldman, who went on to receive a doctorate in psychology from the University of Wisconsin–Madison, is now Deputy Chancellor and Professor of Psychological and Brain Sciences at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. He is founding director of *POWER Up for Student Success,* the first-year experience course for incoming students.

Professor Feldman's proudest professional accomplishment is winning the College Outstanding Teaching Award at UMass. He also has been named a Hewlett Teaching Fellow and was Senior Online Instruction Fellow. He has taught courses at Mount Holyoke College, Wesleyan University, and Virginia Commonwealth University.

Professor Feldman is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association, the Association for Psychological Science, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science. He is a winner of a Fulbright Senior Research Scholar and Lecturer award and has written over 200 scientific articles, book chapters, and books. His books, some of which have been translated into Spanish, French, Portuguese, Dutch, Japanese, and Chinese, include *Improving the First Year of College: Research and Practice; Understanding Psychology,* 12/e; and *Development Across the Life Span,* 7/e. His research interests encompass the study of honesty and truthfulness in everyday life, development of nonverbal behavior in children, and the social psychology of education. His research has been supported by grants from the National Institute of Mental Health and the National Institute on Disabilities and Rehabilitation Research.

With the last of his three children completing college, Professor Feldman occupies his spare time with pretty decent cooking and earnest, but admittedly unpolished, piano playing. He also loves to travel. He lives with his wife, who is an educational psychologist, in a home overlooking the Holyoke mountain range in western Massachusetts.

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Preface

In the first edition of ***P.O.W.E.R. Learning,*** I wrote about Mark Johnson, a student whom I encountered early in my teaching career. Smart, articulate, and likable, he certainly wanted to succeed in college, and he seemed every bit as capable as those students who were doing quite well. Yet Mark was a marginal student, someone who allowed multiple opportunities to succeed to pass him by. Although he clearly had the talent necessary to be successful in college—and ultimately in life—he lacked the skills to make use of his talents.

Over the years, I encountered other students like Mark. I began to wonder: Was there a way to teach *every* student how to succeed, both academically and beyond the classroom? ***P.O.W.E.R. Learning*** embodies the answer to this question.

Based on the conviction that *good students are made, not born,* the central message of ***P.O.W.E.R. Learning*** is that students can be successful in college if they follow the basic principles and strategies presented in this book. Once mastered, these principles and strategies can help students to maximize their accomplishments, both in and out of the classroom.

This text is designed to be used by students in first-year experience courses. For many students, the first-year experience course is a literal lifeline. It provides the means to learn what it takes to achieve academic success and to make a positive social adjustment to the campus community. If students learn how to do well in their first term of college, they are building a foundation that will last a lifetime.

I wrote ***P.O.W.E.R. Learning*** because no existing text provided a systematic framework that could be applied in a variety of topical areas and that would help students to develop learning and problem-solving strategies that would work effectively both in and out of the classroom. The book is an outgrowth of my experience as a college instructor, most of it involving first-year students, combined with my research on the factors that influence learning.

Judging from the response to the prior editions—now in use at hundreds of colleges and universities around the world, and translated into Chinese, Spanish, and other languages—the approach embodied in the book resonates with the philosophy and experience of many educators. Specifically, ***P.O.W.E.R. Learning*** provides a framework that students can begin to use immediately to become more effective students. That framework is designed to be

- Clear, easy to grasp, logical, and compelling, so that students can readily see its merits.
- Effective for a variety of student learning styles—as well as a variety of teaching styles.
- Workable within a variety of course formats and for supplemental instruction.
- Valuable for use in learning communities.
- Transferable to settings ranging from the classroom to the dorm room to the board room.
- Effective in addressing both the mind *and* the spirit, presenting cognitive strategies and skills, while engaging the natural enthusiasm, motivation, and inclination to succeed that students carry within them.

Based on comprehensive, detailed feedback obtained from both instructors and students, ***P.O.W.E.R. Learning*** meets these aims. The book will help students confront and master the numerous challenges of the college experience through use of the P.O.W.E.R. Learning approach, embodied in the five steps of the acronym *P.O.W.E.R.* (*P*repare, *O*rganize, *W*ork, *E*valuate, and *R*ethink). Using simple—yet effective—principles, *P.O.W.E.R. Learning* teaches the skills needed to succeed in college and careers beyond.

The Goals of *P.O.W.E.R. Learning, 7/e*

P.O.W.E.R. Learning addresses five major goals:

- **To provide a systematic framework for organizing the strategies that lead to success:** First and foremost, the book provides a systematic, balanced presentation of the skills required to achieve student success. Using the *P.O.W.E.R.* framework and relying on proven strategies, ***P.O.W.E.R. Learning*** provides specific, hands-on techniques for achieving success as a student.
- **To offer a wide range of skill-building opportunities:** ***P.O.W.E.R. Learning*** provides a wealth of specific exercises, diagnostic questionnaires, case studies, and journal writing activities to help students to develop and master the skills and techniques they need to become effective learners and problem solvers. *Readers learn by doing.*
- **To demonstrate the connection between academic success and success beyond the classroom:** Stressing the importance of *self-reliance* and *self-accountability,* the book demonstrates that the skills required to be a successful student are tied to career and personal success as well.
- **To develop critical thinking skills:** Whether to evaluate the quality of information found on the Internet or in other types of media, or to judge the merits of a position taken by a friend, colleague, or politician, the ability to think critically is more important than ever in this age of information. Through frequent questionnaires, exercises, journal activities, and guided group work, ***P.O.W.E.R. Learning*** helps students to develop their capacity to think critically.
- **To provide an engaging, accessible, and meaningful presentation:** The fifth goal of this book underlies the first four: to write a student-friendly book that is relevant to the needs and interests of its readers and that will promote enthusiasm and interest in the process of becoming a successful student. Learning the strategies needed to become a more effective student should be a stimulating and fulfilling experience. Realizing that these strategies are valuable outside the classroom as well will provide students with an added incentive to master them.

In short, ***P.O.W.E.R. Learning: Strategies for Success in College and Life*** is designed to give students a sense of mastery and success as they read the book and work through its exercises. It is meant to engage and nurture students' minds and spirits, stimulating their intellectual curiosity about the world and planting a seed that will grow throughout their lifetime.

Changes That Make a Difference: New to the Seventh Edition

The valuable input we have received from **P.O.W.E.R. Learning**'s reviewers, along with the feedback from the tens of thousands of students, the hundreds of instructors who used the prior editions, and classroom testing, have resulted in the addition of new and updated information, reflecting advances in our understanding of what makes students successful and changes in college instruction. The following sample of new and revised topics provides a good indication of the book's currency:

CHAPTER 1—P.O.W.E.R. LEARNING: BECOMING A SUCCESSFUL STUDENT

- New material on "Growth Mindset"
- Activities optimized for Connect

CHAPTER 2—MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR TIME

- Material reorganized to balance section length
- Revised material on Procrastination and Balancing School and Life, including Childcare Demands and Eldercare Demands

CHAPTER 3—DISCOVERING YOUR LEARNING STYLES, SELF-CONCEPT, AND VALUES

- Material reorganized to balance section length
- Revised and new material on the needs of Returning Students, including Veterans
- Activities optimized for Connect
- New material on Learning Theories, including classical conditioning

CHAPTER 4—TAKING NOTES

- Material reorganized to balance section length
- New material for digital notetaking
- New material on Strategies for Using Your Notes

CHAPTER 5—TAKING TESTS

- Material reorganized to balance section length and increase clarity
- New material covering digital study groups and online classes
- Activities optimized for Connect
- New Speaking of Success feature

CHAPTER 6—READING AND REMEMBERING

- Combine 6e's chapters on Reading and Memory into a single chapter, strengthening the material of both

- Expanded material on memory techniques
- New introductions to "What Does It Mean? What Do I Know?"
- Activities optimized for Connect

CHAPTER 7—WRITING AND SPEAKING

- Material reorganized to balance section length
- Activities optimized for Connect
- Plagiarism section reviewed for technology updates

CHAPTER 8—CHOOSING YOUR COURSES AND MAJOR

- Material reorganized to balance section length
- Activities optimized for Connect
- Updates to factor in new job market data and school options

CHAPTER 9—TECHNOLOGY AND INFORMATION COMPETENCY

- Material reorganized to balance section length and clarity
- Expanded section on Evaluating the Information You Find on the Web
- New and revised material on Distance Learning and Online Classes
- New material on Social Media Etiquette and Personal Brand Management
- Updates for current technology and security

CHAPTER 10—MAKING GOOD DECISIONS

- New material on Cognitive Biases
- Activities optimized for Connect

CHAPTER 11—DIVERSITY AND YOUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS

- Material reorganized to balance section length and clarity
- Expanded material on Diversity

CHAPTER 12—MONEY MATTERS

- Reorganized to prioritize Building a Financial Philosophy
- Revised section on Credit Cards
- Activities optimized for Connect
- Reviewed and updated college funding information, including Loans, Grants, and Scholarships
- Updated FAFSA material to reflect current procedures

CHAPTER 13—STRESS, HEALTH, AND WELLNESS

- Reorganized to create sections on Physical Health and Mental Health
- Activities optimized for Connect
- Updated material in Drug Use and Abuse to cover new developments
- Expanded material in Keeping Well

Text Features: Achieving P O W E R the Goals of Learning

P.O.W.E.R. Learning provides a systematic framework for organizing the strategies that lead to success

P.O.W.E.R. Plan

Each chapter utilizes the principles of the **P.O.W.E.R. system (Prepare, Organize, Work, Evaluate, and Rethink),** so students can clearly see how easy it is to incorporate this effective process into their everyday routine. The P.O.W.E.R. plan illustration highlights the key steps for the corresponding chapter material.

The goals of *P.O.W.E.R. Learning: Strategies for Success in College and Life* are achieved through a consistent, carefully devised set of features common to every chapter. Students and faculty endorsed each of these elements.

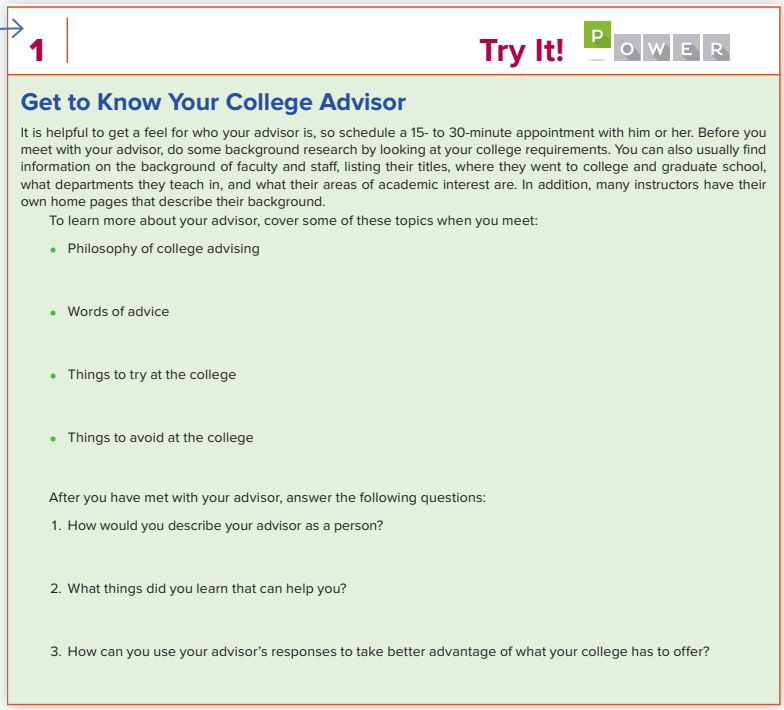
Handy, updated **reference charts** appear throughout the text for quickly accessing and organizing important material.

table 7.1 Major Types of College Writing

Research paper	A paper requiring abstract, critical thinking supported through the collection of existing information. Often requires analysis and synthesis of the material to develop a conclusion.
Essay	A paper written from an author's personal point of view and arguing a particular point. It may take the form of a review, criticism, or personal recollection, or it may argue a political viewpoint.
Critical review	Criticism of an argument, article, musical piece, or other work.
Journal	Personal reflections on class readings or assignments.

P.O.W.E.R. Learning offers a wide range of skill-building opportunities

Every chapter offers numerous updated **Try It!** activities for gaining hands-on experience with the material covered in the chapter. These include questionnaires, self-assessments, and group exercises to do with classmates. The **Try It!** activities, along with other assessment opportunities, are also available on the POWER Learning Connect Library.



1 Try It! POWER

Get to Know Your College Advisor

It is helpful to get a feel for who your advisor is, so schedule a 15- to 30-minute appointment with him or her. Before you meet with your advisor, do some background research by looking at your college requirements. You can also usually find information on the background of faculty and staff, listing their titles, where they went to college and graduate school, what departments they teach in, and what their areas of academic interest are. In addition, many instructors have their own home pages that describe their background.

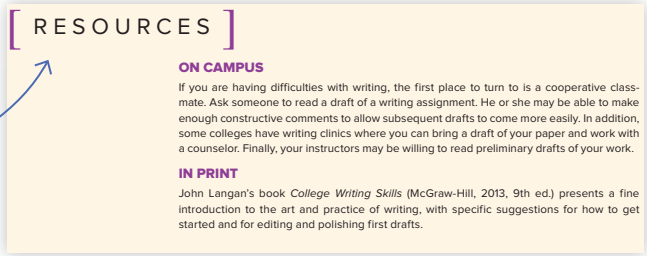
To learn more about your advisor, cover some of these topics when you meet:

- Philosophy of college advising
- Words of advice
- Things to try at the college
- Things to avoid at the college

After you have met with your advisor, answer the following questions:

1. How would you describe your advisor as a person?
2. What things did you learn that can help you?
3. How can you use your advisor's responses to take better advantage of what your college has to offer?

Every chapter includes an updated list of the three types of **resources** that are useful in finding and utilizing information relevant to the chapter: a list of on-campus resources, books, and websites. This material helps students study and retain important concepts presented in the chapter, as well as guide their future inquiry.



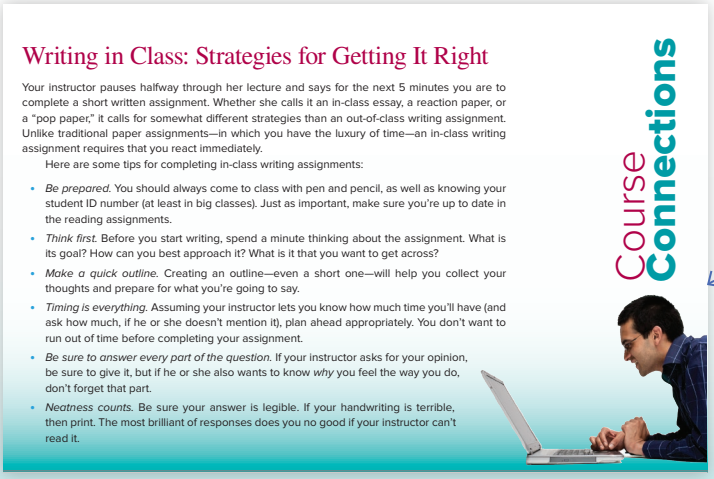
[RESOURCES]

ON CAMPUS

If you are having difficulties with writing, the first place to turn to is a cooperative classmate. Ask someone to read a draft of a writing assignment. He or she may be able to make enough constructive comments to allow subsequent drafts to come more easily. In addition, some colleges have writing clinics where you can bring a draft of your paper and work with a counselor. Finally, your instructors may be willing to read preliminary drafts of your work.

IN PRINT

John Langan's book *College Writing Skills* (McGraw-Hill, 2013, 9th ed.) presents a fine introduction to the art and practice of writing, with specific suggestions for how to get started and for editing and polishing first drafts.



Writing in Class: Strategies for Getting It Right

Your instructor pauses halfway through her lecture and says for the next 5 minutes you are to complete a short written assignment. Whether she calls it an in-class essay, a reaction paper, or a "pop paper," it calls for somewhat different strategies than an out-of-class writing assignment. Unlike traditional paper assignments—in which you have the luxury of time—an in-class writing assignment requires that you react immediately.

Here are some tips for completing in-class writing assignments:

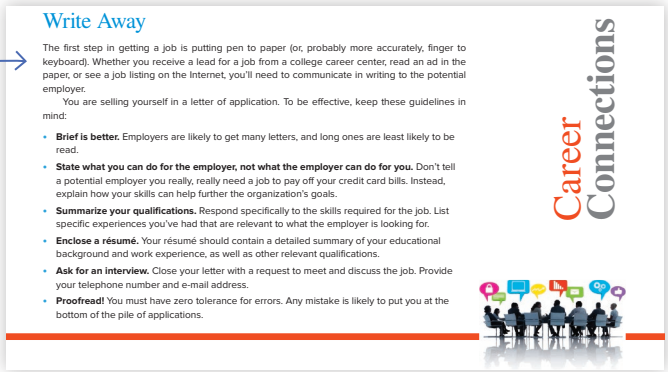
- *Be prepared.* You should always come to class with pen and pencil, as well as knowing your student ID number (at least in big classes). Just as important, make sure you're up to date in the reading assignments.
- *Think first.* Before you start writing, spend a minute thinking about the assignment. What is its goal? How can you best approach it? What is it that you want to get across?
- *Make a quick outline.* Creating an outline—even a short one—will help you collect your thoughts and prepare for what you're going to say.
- *Timing is everything.* Assuming your instructor lets you know how much time you'll have (and ask how much, if he or she doesn't mention it), plan ahead appropriately. You don't want to run out of time before completing your assignment.
- *Be sure to answer every part of the question.* If your instructor asks for your opinion, be sure to give it, but if he or she also wants to know *why* you feel the way you do, don't forget that part.
- *Neatness counts.* Be sure your answer is legible. If your handwriting is terrible, then print. The most brilliant of responses does you no good if your instructor can't read it.

Course Connections

Every chapter includes a **Course Connections** box that shows students how to use the chapter's content to maximize their success in particular classes.

P.O.W.E.R. Learning demonstrates the connection between academic success and success beyond the classroom

The **Career Connections** feature links the material in the chapter to the world of work, demonstrating how the strategies discussed in the chapter are related to career choices and success in the workplace.



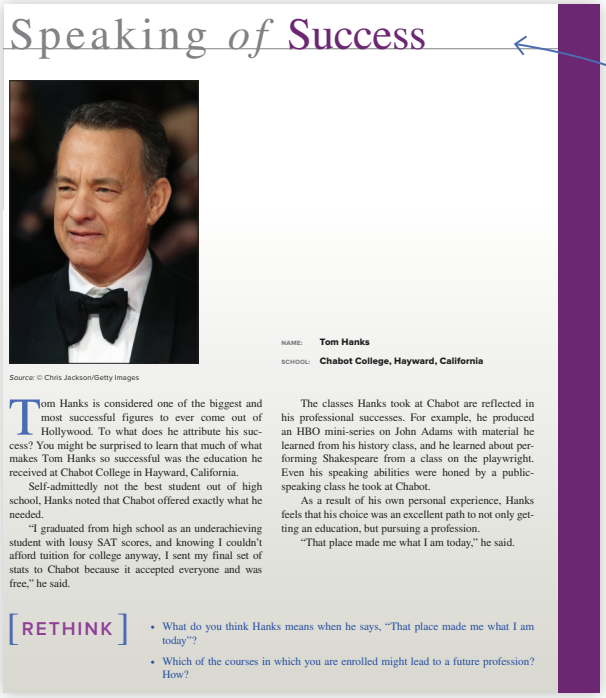
Write Away

The first step in getting a job is putting pen to paper (or, probably more accurately, finger to keyboard). Whether you receive a lead for a job from a college career center, read an ad in the paper, or see a job listing on the Internet, you'll need to communicate in writing to the potential employer.

You are selling yourself in a letter of application. To be effective, keep these guidelines in mind:

- **Brief is better.** Employers are likely to get many letters, and long ones are least likely to be read.
- **State what you can do for the employer, not what the employer can do for you.** Don't tell a potential employer you really, really need a job to pay off your credit card bills. Instead, explain how your skills can help further the organization's goals.
- **Summarize your qualifications.** Respond specifically to the skills required for the job. List specific experiences you've had that are relevant to what the employer is looking for.
- **Enclose a résumé.** Your résumé should contain a detailed summary of your educational background and work experience, as well as other relevant qualifications.
- **Ask for an interview.** Close your letter with a request to meet and discuss the job. Provide your telephone number and e-mail address.
- **Proofread!** You must have zero tolerance for errors. Any mistake is likely to put you at the bottom of the pile of applications.

Career Connections



Speaking *of* Success

Source: © Chris Jackson/Getty Images

NAME: **Tom Hanks**

SCHOOL: **Chabot College, Hayward, California**

Tom Hanks is considered one of the biggest and most successful figures to ever come out of Hollywood. To what does he attribute his success? You might be surprised to learn that much of what makes Tom Hanks so successful was the education he received at Chabot College in Hayward, California.

Self-admittedly not the best student out of high school, Hanks noted that Chabot offered exactly what he needed.

"I graduated from high school as an underachieving student with lousy SAT scores, and knowing I couldn't afford tuition for college anyway, I sent my final set of stats to Chabot because it accepted everyone and was free," he said.

The classes Hanks took at Chabot are reflected in his professional successes. For example, he produced an HBO mini-series on John Adams with material he learned from his history class, and he learned about performing Shakespeare from a class on the playwright. Even his speaking abilities were honed by a public-speaking class he took at Chabot.

As a result of his own personal experience, Hanks feels that his choice was an excellent path to not only getting an education, but pursuing a profession.

"That place made me what I am today," he said.

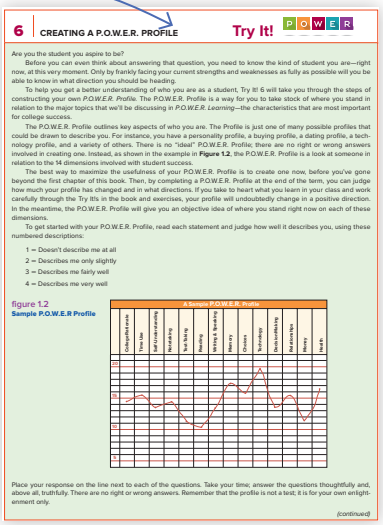
[RETHINK]

- What do you think Hanks means when he says, "That place made me what I am today"?
- Which of the courses in which you are enrolled might lead to a future profession? How?

Many new **Speaking of Success** articles have been added that profile real-life success stories. Some of these people are well-known individuals, whereas others are current students or recent graduates who have overcome academic difficulties to achieve success. In addition—and **new to this edition—critical thinking questions** end each **Speaking of Success** profile.

P.O.W.E.R. Learning helps you develop critical thinking skills

Chapter 1 features a **P.O.W.E.R. Profile Assessment tool** that gives students a sense of where they stand—both numerically and graphically—in relation to the key topics addressed in the book. The "P.O.W.E.R. Profile" helps students identify their strengths and weaknesses and determine how they want to improve. Students can return to the P.O.W.E.R. Profile at the end of the course to assess and chart their progress.



6 CREATING A P.O.W.E.R. PROFILE Try It! P O W E R

Are you the student you aspire to be?

Before you can even think about answering that question, you need to know the kind of student you are—right now, at this very moment. Only by frankly facing your current strengths and weaknesses as fully as possible will you be able to know in what direction you should be heading.

To help you get a better understanding of who you are as a student, Try It! 6 will take you through the steps of constructing your own *P.O.W.E.R. Profile*. The P.O.W.E.R. Profile is a way for you to take stock of where you stand in relation to the major topics that we'll be discussing in *P.O.W.E.R. Learning*—the characteristics that are most important for college success.

The P.O.W.E.R. Profile outlines key aspects of who you are. The Profile is just one of many possible profiles that could be drawn to describe you. For instance, you have a personality profile, a buying profile, a dating profile, a technology profile, and a variety of others. There is no "ideal" P.O.W.E.R. Profile; there are no right or wrong answers involved in creating one. Instead, as shown in the example in **Figure 1.2**, the P.O.W.E.R. Profile is a look at someone in relation to the 14 dimensions involved with student success.

The best way to maximize the usefulness of your P.O.W.E.R. Profile is to create one now, before you've gone beyond the first chapter of this book. Then, by completing a P.O.W.E.R. Profile at the end of the term, you can judge how much your profile has changed and in what directions. If you take to heart what you learn in your class and work carefully through the Try It!s in the book and exercises, your profile will undoubtedly change in a positive direction. In the meantime, the P.O.W.E.R. Profile will give you an objective idea of where you stand right now on each of these dimensions.

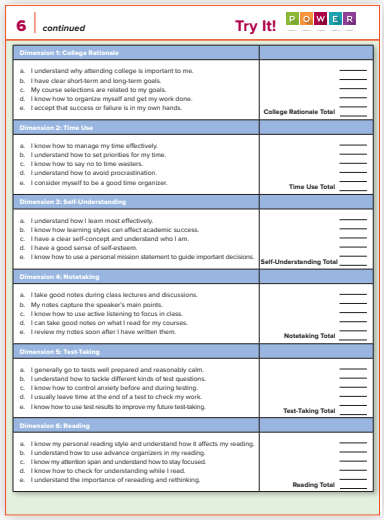
To get started with your P.O.W.E.R. Profile, read each statement and judge how well it describes you, using these numbered descriptions:

1 = Doesn't describe me at all
2 = Describes me only slightly
3 = Describes me fairly well
4 = Describes me very well

figure 1.2
Sample P.O.W.E.R Profile

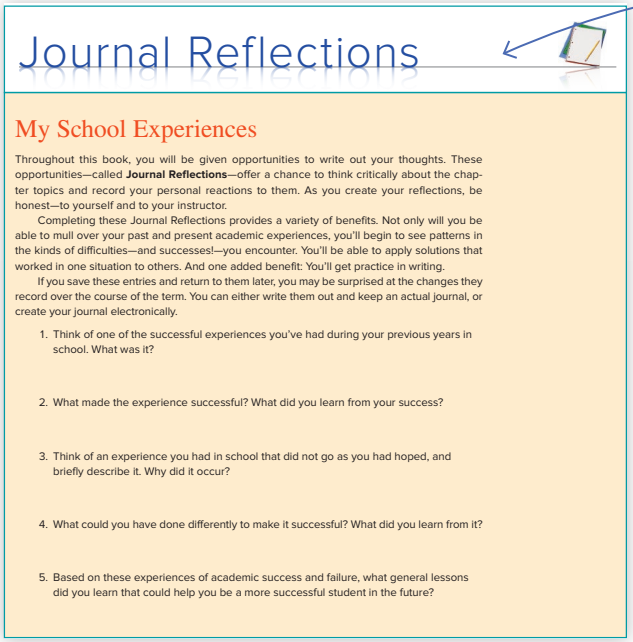
Place your response on the line next to each of the questions. Take your time; answer the questions thoughtfully and, above all, truthfully. There are no right or wrong answers. Remember that the profile is not a test; it is for your own enlightenment only.

(continued)



6 *continued* Try It! P O W E R

Dimension 1: College Rationale	
a. I understand why attending college is important to me. b. I have clear short-term and long-term goals. c. My course selections are related to my goals. d. I know how to organize myself and get my work done. e. I accept that success or failure is in my own hands.	College Rationale Total ____
Dimension 2: Time Use	
a. I know how to manage my time effectively. b. I understand how to set priorities for my time. c. I know how to say no to time wasters. d. I understand how to avoid procrastination. e. I consider myself to be a good time organizer.	Time Use Total ____
Dimension 3: Self-Understanding	
a. I understand how I learn most effectively. b. I know how learning styles can affect academic success. c. I have a clear self-concept and understand who I am. d. I have a good sense of self-esteem. e. I know how to use a personal mission statement to guide important decisions.	Self-Understanding Total ____
Dimension 4: Notetaking	
a. I take good notes during class lectures and discussions. b. My notes capture the speaker's main points. c. I know how to use active listening to focus in class. d. I can take good notes on what I read for my courses. e. I review my notes soon after I have written them.	Notetaking Total ____
Dimension 5: Test-Taking	
a. I generally go to tests well prepared and reasonably calm. b. I understand how to tackle different kinds of test questions. c. I know how to control anxiety before and during testing. d. I usually leave time at the end of a test to check my work. e. I know how to use test results to improve my future test-taking.	Test-Taking Total ____
Dimension 6: Reading	
a. I know my personal reading style and understand how it affects my reading. b. I understand how to use advance organizers in my reading. c. I know my attention span and understand how to stay focused. d. I know how to check for understanding while I read. e. I understand the importance of rereading and rethinking.	Reading Total ____



Journal Reflections

My School Experiences

Throughout this book, you will be given opportunities to write out your thoughts. These opportunities—called **Journal Reflections**—offer a chance to think critically about the chapter topics and record your personal reactions to them. As you create your reflections, be honest—to yourself and to your instructor.

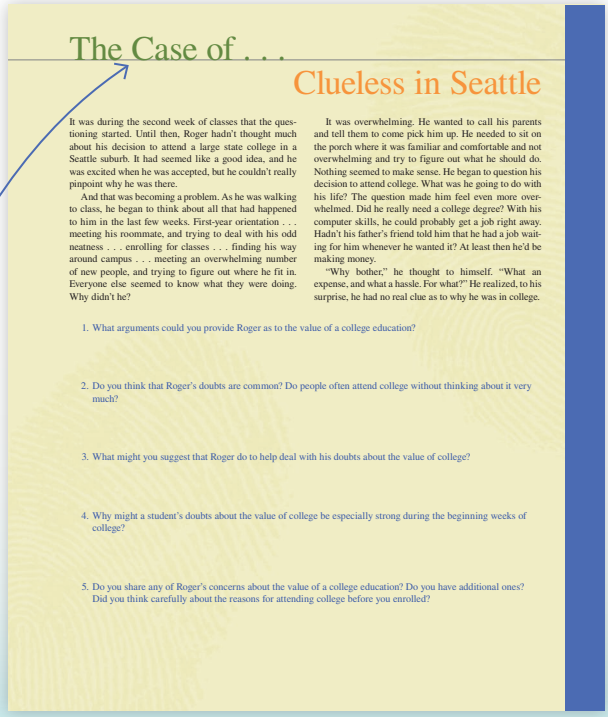
Completing these Journal Reflections provides a variety of benefits. Not only will you be able to mull over your past and present academic experiences, you'll begin to see patterns in the kinds of difficulties—and successes!—you encounter. You'll be able to apply solutions that worked in one situation to others. And one added benefit: You'll get practice in writing.

If you save these entries and return to them later, you may be surprised at the changes they record over the course of the term. You can either write them out and keep an actual journal, or create your journal electronically.

1. Think of one of the successful experiences you've had during your previous years in school. What was it?
2. What made the experience successful? What did you learn from your success?
3. Think of an experience you had in school that did not go as you had hoped, and briefly describe it. Why did it occur?
4. What could you have done differently to make it successful? What did you learn from it?
5. Based on these experiences of academic success and failure, what general lessons did you learn that could help you be a more successful student in the future?

The **Journal Reflections** feature provides students with the opportunity to keep an ongoing journal, making entries relevant to the chapter content. Students are asked to reflect and think critically about related prior experiences. These conclude with questions designed to elicit critical thinking and exploration.

Each chapter ends with a **case study (The Case of . . .)** to which the principles described in the chapter can be applied. Case studies are based on situations that students might themselves encounter. Each case provides a series of questions that encourage students to consider what they've learned and to use critical thinking skills in responding to these questions.



The Case of . . .

Clueless in Seattle

It was during the second week of classes that the questioning started. Until then, Roger hadn't thought much about his decision to attend a large state college in a Seattle suburb. It had seemed like a good idea, and he was excited when he was accepted, but he couldn't really pinpoint why he was there.

And that was becoming a problem. As he was walking to class, he began to think about all that had happened to him in the last few weeks. First-year orientation . . . meeting his roommate, and trying to deal with his odd neatness . . . enrolling for classes . . . finding his way around campus . . . meeting an overwhelming number of new people, and trying to figure out where he fit in. Everyone else seemed to know what they were doing. Why didn't he?

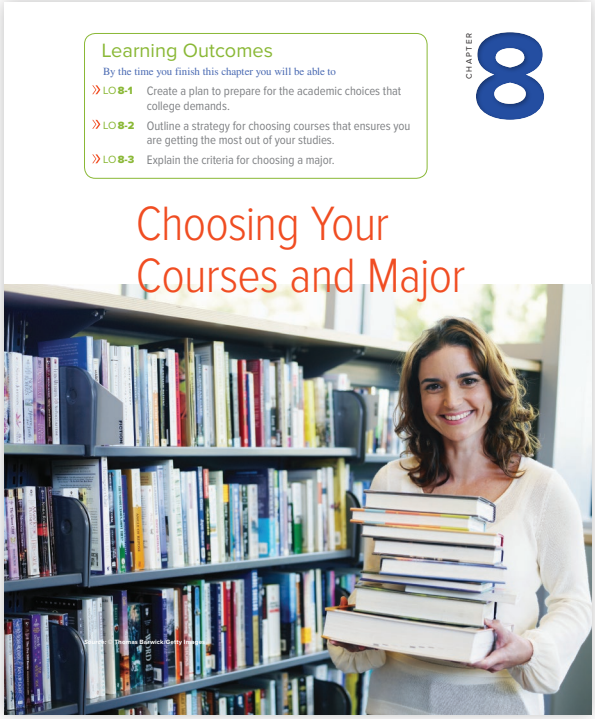
It was overwhelming. He wanted to call his parents and tell them to come pick him up. He needed to sit on the porch where it was familiar and comfortable and not overwhelming and try to figure out what he should do. Nothing seemed to make sense. He began to question his decision to attend college. What was he going to do with his life? The question made him feel even more overwhelmed. Did he really need a college degree? With his computer skills, he could probably get a job right away. Hadn't his father's friend told him that he had a job waiting for him whenever he wanted it? At least then he'd be making money.

"Why bother," he thought to himself. "What an expense, and what a hassle. For what?" He realized, to his surprise, he had no real clue as to why he was in college.

1. What arguments could you provide Roger as to the value of a college education?
2. Do you think that Roger's doubts are common? Do people often attend college without thinking about it very much?
3. What might you suggest that Roger do to help deal with his doubts about the value of college?
4. Why might a student's doubts about the value of college be especially strong during the beginning weeks of college?
5. Do you share any of Roger's concerns about the value of a college education? Do you have additional ones? Did you think carefully about the reasons for attending college before you enrolled?

P.O.W.E.R. Learning provides an engaging, accessible, and meaningful presentation

An appealing design and visual presentation highlight large, clear photos carefully selected to show the diversity of students as well as the latest in technological aids and devices.



Learning Outcomes

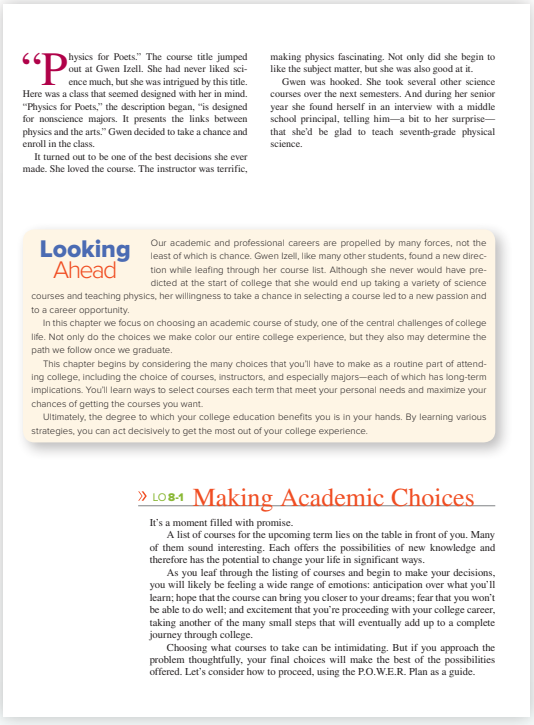
By the time you finish this chapter you will be able to

- LO 8-1 Create a plan to prepare for the academic choices that college demands.
- LO 8-2 Outline a strategy for choosing courses that ensures you are getting the most out of your studies.
- LO 8-3 Explain the criteria for choosing a major.

CHAPTER 8

Choosing Your Courses and Major

Chapter-opening scenarios describe an individual grappling with a situation that is relevant to the subject matter of the chapter. Readers will be able to relate to these vignettes, which feature students running behind schedule, figuring out a way to keep up with reading assignments, or facing a long list of vocabulary words to memorize.



"Physics for Poets." The course title jumped out at Gwen Izell. She had never liked science much, but she was intrigued by this title. Here was a class that seemed designed with her in mind. "Physics for Poets," the description began, "is designed for nonscience majors. It presents the links between physics and the arts." Gwen decided to take a chance and enroll in the class.

It turned out to be one of the best decisions she ever made. She loved the course. The instructor was terrific, making physics fascinating. Not only did she begin to like the subject matter, but she was also good at it.

Gwen was hooked. She took several other science courses over the next semesters. And during her senior year she found herself in an interview with a middle school principal, telling him—a bit to her surprise—that she'd be glad to teach seventh-grade physical science.

Looking Ahead

Our academic and professional careers are propelled by many forces, not the least of which is chance. Gwen Izell, like many other students, found a new direction while leafing through her course list. Although she never would have predicted at the start of college that she would end up taking a variety of science courses and teaching physics, her willingness to take a chance in selecting a course led to a new passion and to a career opportunity.

In this chapter we focus on choosing an academic course of study, one of the central challenges of college life. Not only do the choices we make color our entire college experience, but they also may determine the path we follow once we graduate.

This chapter begins by considering the many choices that you'll have to make as a routine part of attending college, including the choice of courses, instructors, and especially majors—each of which has long-term implications. You'll learn ways to select courses each term that meet your personal needs and maximize your chances of getting the courses you want.

Ultimately, the degree to which your college education benefits you is in your hands. By learning various strategies, you can act decisively to get the most out of your college experience.

» LO 8-1 Making Academic Choices

It's a moment filled with promise.

A list of courses for the upcoming term lies on the table in front of you. Many of them sound interesting. Each offers the possibilities of new knowledge and therefore has the potential to change your life in significant ways.

As you leaf through the listing of courses and begin to make your decisions, you will likely be feeling a wide range of emotions: anticipation over what you'll learn; hope that the course can bring you closer to your dreams; fear that you won't be able to do well; and excitement that you're proceeding with your college career, taking another of the many small steps that will eventually add up to a complete journey through college.

Choosing what courses to take can be intimidating. But if you approach the problem thoughtfully, your final choices will make the best of the possibilities offered. Let's consider how to proceed, using the P.O.W.E.R. Plan as a guide.

Key terms appear in boldface in the text and are linked to a glossary definition. In addition, they are listed alphabetically in a **Key Terms and Concepts** section at the end of the chapter, which is also linked to the glossary definition.

KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

College advisor (p. 212)
Distance learning (p. 222)
Double major (p. 228)
Electives (p. 217)
Grade point average (GPA) (p. 211)
Major (p. 211)
Minor (p. 229)
Prerequisites (p. 212)
Register (p. 217)
Registrar (p. 216)
Service learning (p. 224)
Transcript (p. 216)
Unique major (p. 229)

All of these reviewed and tested features are designed not only to help students understand, practice, and master the core concepts presented in this text, but also to collectively support the main goals and vision of this text, as demonstrated on the following pages.

The P.O.W.E.R. Resources

The same philosophy and goals that guided the writing of *P.O.W.E.R. Learning: Strategies for Success in College and Life* led to the development of a comprehensive teaching package. Through a series of focus groups, questionnaires, and surveys, we asked instructors what they needed to optimize their courses. We also analyzed what other publishers provided to make sure that the ancillary materials accompanying *P.O.W.E.R. Learning* would surpass the level of support to which instructors are accustomed. As a result of the extensive research that went into devising the teaching resources, we are confident that whether you are an instructor with years of experience or are teaching the course for the first time, this book's instructional package will enhance classroom instruction and provide guidance as you prepare for and teach the course.

Print Resources

ANNOTATED INSTRUCTOR'S EDITION

The Annotated Instructor's Edition (AIE), prepared by Joni Webb Petschauer and Cindy Wallace of Appalachian State University, contains the full text of the student edition of the book with the addition of notes that provide a rich variety of teaching strategies, discussion prompts, and helpful cross-references to the Instructor's Resource Manual. The AIE has been completely redesigned in an effort to provide more frontline teaching assistance.

INSTRUCTOR'S RESOURCE MANUAL

Written by Joni Webb Petschauer and Cindy Wallace of Appalachian State University with additional contributions from experienced instructors across the country, this manual provides specific suggestions for teaching each topic, tips on implementing a first-year experience program, handouts to generate creative classroom activities, audiovisual resources, sample syllabi, and tips on incorporating the Internet into the course.

CUSTOMIZE YOUR TEXT

P.O.W.E.R. Learning can be customized to suit your needs. The text can be abbreviated for shorter courses and can be expanded to include semester schedules, campus maps, additional essays, activities, or exercises, along with other materials specific to your curriculum or situation. Chapters designed for student athletes, career preparation, and transferring students are also available.

Human Resources

WORKSHOPS WITH AUTHOR AND AUTHOR TEAM

Are you faced with the challenge of launching a first-year experience course on your campus? Would you like to invigorate your college success program, incorporating the most recent pedagogical and technological innovations? Is faculty recruitment an obstacle to the success of your program? Are you interested in learning more about the P.O.W.E.R. system?

Workshops are available on these and many other subjects for anyone conducting or even just considering a first-year experience program. Led by author Robert

Feldman, *P.O.W.E.R. Learning* Instructor's Resource Manual authors Joni Webb Petschauer and Cindy Wallace, or one of the McGraw-Hill *P.O.W.E.R. Learning* consultants, each workshop is tailored to the needs of individual campuses or programs. For more information, contact your local representative, or e-mail us at student.success@mheducation.com.

Digital Resources

LASSI: LEARNING AND STUDY STRATEGIES INVENTORY

The LASSI is a 10-scale, 80-item assessment of students' awareness about and use of learning and study strategies related to skill, will, and self-regulation components of strategic learning. The focus is on both covert and overt thoughts, behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs that relate to successful learning and that can be altered through educational interventions. Research has repeatedly demonstrated that these factors contribute significantly to success in college and that they can be learned or enhanced through educational interventions such as learning and study skills courses.

The LASSI provides standardized scores and national norms for 10 different scales. The LASSI is both diagnostic and prescriptive. It provides students with a diagnosis of their strengths and weaknesses compared to other college students in the areas covered by the 10 scales, and it is prescriptive in that it provides feedback about areas where students may be weak and need to improve their knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and skills.

The LASSI is available in print or online at **www.hhpublishing.com**. Ask your McGraw-Hill sales representative for more details.

IMPLEMENTING A STUDENT SUCCESS COURSE

This innovative web content assists you in developing and sustaining your Student Success course. Features include a "how to" guide for designing and proposing a new course, with easy-to-use templates for determining budget needs and resources. Examples of model programs are provided from two-year, four-year, and career schools. The site explores course goals, such as orientation and retention, and provides research data to support your proposal. Also included are materials to help sustain your course, such as faculty development programs and online resources.

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The POWER to Succeed!

The Power of Support!

Let the McGraw-Hill Student Success Team support your course with our workshop program.

- Planning to develop a first-year experience course from scratch?
- Reenergizing your first-year experience course?
- Trying to integrate technology in your class?
- Exploring the concept of learning communities?

We offer a range of author- and consultant-led workshops that can be tailored to meet the needs of your institution.

Our team of experts, led by *P.O.W.E.R. Learning* author Robert Feldman, can address issues of course management, assessment, organization, and implementation. How do you get students to commit to your program? How do you achieve support from your institution? How can you evaluate and demonstrate the effectiveness of your First-Year Experience course? These are questions that every program faces. Let us help you to find an answer that works for you.

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- Using Learning Styles in the Classroom
- Creating Student Success Courses Online
- Motivating Your Students

To schedule a workshop, please contact your local McGraw-Hill representative. Alternately, contact us directly at student.success@mheducation.com to begin the process of bringing a P.O.W.E.R. Learning workshop to you.

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Do you want to

- Only cover select chapters?
- Personalize your book with campus information (maps, schedules, registration materials, etc.)?
- Add your own materials, including exercises or assignments?
- Address specific student populations, such as student athletes and transferring students?

P.O.W.E.R. Learning can be customized to suit your needs.

WHY CUSTOMIZE?

Perhaps your course focuses on study skills and you prefer that your text not cover life issues such as money matters, health and wellness, or information on choosing a major. Whatever the reason, we can make it happen, easily. McGraw-Hill Custom Publishing can deliver a book that perfectly meets your needs.

WHAT WILL MY CUSTOM BOOK LOOK LIKE?

Any chapters from the *P.O.W.E.R. Learning* book that you include will be in full color. Additional materials can be added between chapters or at the beginning or end of the book in black and white. Binding (paperback, three-hole punch, you name it) is up to you. You can even add your own custom cover to reflect your school image.

WHAT CAN I ADD?

Anything! Here are some ideas to get you started:

- **Campus map** or anything specific to your school: academic regulations or requirements, syllabi, important phone numbers or dates, library hours.
- **Calendars** for the school year, for local theater groups, for a concert series.
- **Interviews** with local businesspeople or your school's graduates in which they describe their own challenges and successes.
- **Your course syllabus or homework assignments** so your students have everything they need for your course under one cover and you don't have to make copies to hand out.

SPECIAL CHAPTERS DESIGNED FOR THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF YOUR STUDENTS!

Three additional chapters are available for your customized text and have been designed to address the needs of specific student populations.

- *Strategies for Success for Student Athletes.* This chapter discusses the unique challenges of student athletes, such as managing school and team pressures, using resources and understanding eligibility, and knowing when and how to ask for help. It also addresses special concerns such as burnout, dealing with injury, and hazing.
- *Taking Charge of Your Career.* This chapter helps students determine the best career choices that fit personal goals. It provides important tips on how to develop a career portfolio, prepare a résumé and cover letters, and have a successful interview, including follow-up strategies.
- *Transfer Strategies: Making the Leap from Community College to a Four-Year School.* Designed for the potential transfer student, this chapter looks at the pros and cons of moving beyond a two-year degree and what personal decisions to make. It guides students through the transfer process, including applications, credit transfer, financial assistance, and transfer shock.

HOW DO I CREATE A CUSTOM BOOK?

The secret to custom publishing is this: *Custom Publishing Is Simple!*

Here are the basic steps:

- You select the chapters you would like to use from *P.O.W.E.R. Learning* with your McGraw-Hill sales representative.
- Together, we discuss your preferences for the binding, the cover, etc., and provide you with information on costs.
- We assign your customized text an ISBN and your project goes into production. A custom text will typically publish within 6–8 weeks of the order.

- Your book is manufactured and it is put into inventory in the McGraw-Hill distribution center.
- You are sent a free desk copy of your custom publication.
- Your bookstore calls McGraw-Hill's customer service department and orders the text.

You select what you want—we handle the details!
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Without a doubt, there is no better publishing group in the business than the one that worked on *P.O.W.E.R. Learning.* I count myself extremely lucky not only to have found myself a part of this world-class team, but to count each of them as friends.

In the end, I am eternally indebted to my family, both extended and immediate. Sarah, Jeff, and Lilia; Josh, Julie, and Naomi; Jon, Leigh, Alex, Miles; and of course Kathy, thank you for everything.

Robert S. Feldman

Dear Student

Congratulations! You are at the beginning of an academic journey that will impact your future in ways you can only imagine. This text and this course are designed to help make that journey as meaningful and enriching as possible. As you begin this chapter of your life, remember that you are not alone.

Every first-year student (as well as many returning students) encounters challenges. Whether it be juggling family, work, and school or preparing for a test, the challenges you face are daunting.

This is where ***P.O.W.E.R. Learning: Strategies for Success in College and Life*** comes in. It is designed to help you to master the challenges you'll face in school as well as in life after graduation. The P.O.W.E.R. Learning system—which is based on five key steps embodied in the word P.O.W.E.R. (Prepare, Organize, Work, Evaluate, and Rethink)—teaches strategies that will help you become a more successful student and that will give you an edge in attaining what you want to accomplish in life.

But it's up to you to make use of the book. Familiarize yourself with the features of the book (described above) and use the built-in learning aids within the book, on the accompanying website, and in Connect. By doing so, you'll maximize the book's usefulness and get the most out of it.

Finally, I welcome your comments and suggestions about ***P.O.W.E.R. Learning and Your Life: Essentials of Student Success,*** as well as the website that accompanies the book. You can write me at the Chancellor's Office at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Massachusetts 01003. Even easier, send me an e-mail message at feldman@chancellor.umass.edu. I will write back!

P.O.W.E.R. Learning: Strategies for Success in College and Life presents the tools that can maximize your chances for academic and life success. But remember that they're only tools, and their effectiveness depends on the way in which they are used. Ultimately, you are the one who is in charge of your future. Make the journey a rewarding, exciting, and enlightening one!

Robert S. Feldman

Learning Outcomes

By the time you finish this chapter you will be able to

- LO 1-1 Explain the benefits of a college education.
- LO 1-2 Identify the basic principles of P.O.W.E.R. Learning.
- LO 1-3 Discuss how expert students use P.O.W.E.R. Learning to achieve college success.

CHAPTER 1

P.O.W.E.R. Learning: Becoming a Successful Student

Source: © Lifesize/Getty Images

The day has started off with a bang. Literally. As Jessie Trevant struggles sleepily to turn off her smartphone's pulsing ringing, she knocks it off the desk next to her bed. The loud thud as it hits the floor not only wakes her fully but also rouses her roommate, who grumbles resentfully.

Struggling out of bed, Jessie reflects on the day ahead. It's one of her most intense class days—four different classes, scattered across the campus. She also must put in several hours of work in the college bookstore, where she has a 15-hour-a-week job, and she knows she'd better get started on her history paper, due next week. And then there's that biology test that she must take this morning.

After a quick shower, Jessie joins the flood of students making their way to classes. She glances at her biology textbook and feels a wave of anxiety flood over her: Will I do well enough? How will I manage to hold down a job and have enough time to study? Will I make friends here? Will it ever feel like home? Will I make my family proud? . . . *And underlying them all is a single challenge: Will I be successful in college?*

Source: © Alexmillos/Alamy

Looking Ahead

Whether academic pursuits are a struggle or come easily to you . . . whether you live on campus or commute . . . whether you are fresh out of high school or are returning to school many years after high school graduation—college is a challenge. Every one of us has concerns about our capabilities and motivation, and new situations—like starting college—make us wonder how well we'll succeed.

That's where this book comes in. It is designed to help you learn the most effective ways to approach the challenges you encounter, not just in college, but outside the classroom too. It will teach you practical strategies, hints, and tips that can lead you to success, all centered around an approach to achieving college success: P.O.W.E.R. Learning.

This book is designed to be useful in a way that is different from other college texts. It presents information in a hands-on format. It's meant to be used—not just read. Write on it, underline words and sentences, use a highlighter, circle key points, and complete the questionnaires right in the book. The more exercises you do, the more you'll get from the book. Remember, this is a book to help you with your coursework throughout college, so it's a good idea to invest your time here and now. If the learning techniques you master here become second nature, the payoff will be enormous.

» LO 1-1 Why Go to College?

Congratulations. You're in college.

But *why*? Although it seems as if it should be easy to answer why you're continuing your education, for most students it's not so simple. The reasons that people go to college vary from the practical ("I want to get a good job"), to the lofty ("I want to learn about people and the world"), to the unreflective ("Why not?—I don't have anything better to do"). Consider your own reasons for attending college as you complete **Try It! 1**.

Surveys of first-year college students show that the vast majority say they want to learn about things that interest them, get training for a specific career, land a better job, and make more money (see **Figure 1.1**). And, in fact, it's not wrong to expect that a college education will help people find better jobs. On average, college graduates earn about 75 percent more than high school graduates over

1 WHY AM I GOING TO COLLEGE?

Try It! P O W E R

Place 1, 2, and 3 by the three most important reasons that you have for attending college:

____ I want to get a good job when I graduate.
____ My parents want me to go.
____ I couldn't find a job.
____ I want to get away from home.
____ I want to get a better job.
____ I want to try something different.
____ I want to gain a general education and appreciation of ideas.
____ I want to improve my reading and study skills.
____ I want to become a more cultured person.
____ I want to make more money.
____ I want to learn more about things that interest me.
____ A mentor or role model encouraged me to go.
____ I want to prove to others that I can succeed.

Now consider the following:

- What do your answers tell you about yourself?
- What reasons besides these did you think about when you were applying to college?
- How do you think your reasons compare to those of other first-year students who are starting college with you?

their working lifetime. That difference adds up: Over the course of their working lifetimes, college graduates earn close to a million dollars more than those with only a high school degree. Furthermore, as jobs become increasingly complex and technologically sophisticated, college will become more and more of a necessity.

But the value of college extends far beyond dollars and cents. Consider these added reasons for pursuing a college education:

- **You'll learn to think critically and communicate better.** Here's what one student said about his college experience after he graduated: "It's not about what you major in or which classes you take. . . . It's really about learning to think and to communicate. Wherever you end up, you'll need to be able to analyze and solve problems—to figure out what needs to be done and do it."[1]

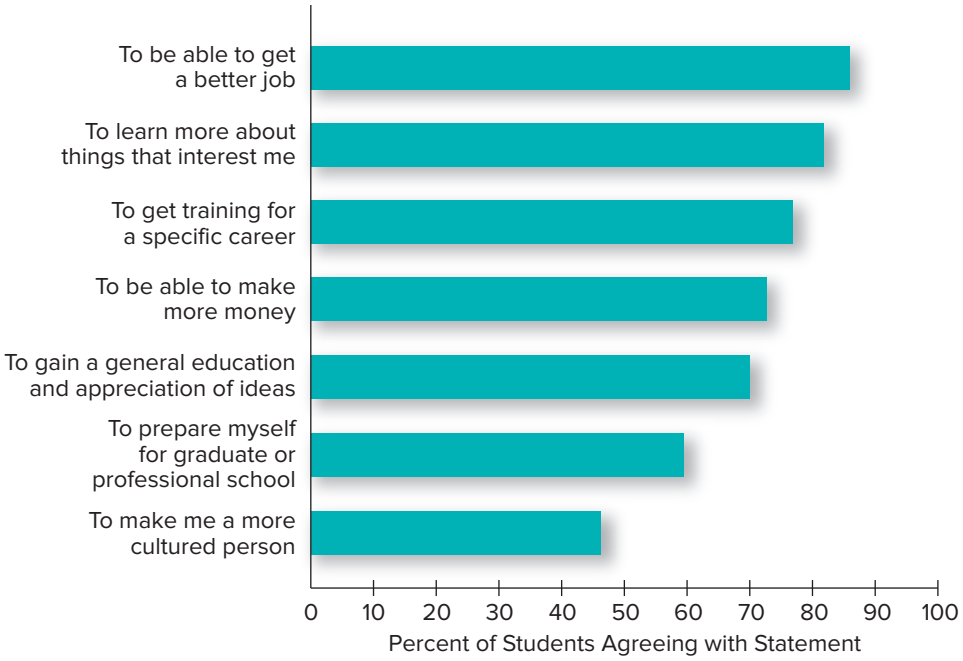
  Education improves your ability to understand the world—to understand it as it is now, and to prepare to understand it as it will be.
- **You'll be able to better deal with advances in knowledge and technology that are changing the world.** Genetic engineering . . . drugs to reduce forgetfulness . . . computers that respond to our voices. . . . No one knows what the future will hold, but you can prepare for it through a college education. Education can provide you with intellectual tools that you can apply regardless of the specific situation in which you find yourself.
- **You'll acquire skills and perspectives that will shape how you deal with new situations and challenges.** The only certainty about how your life will unfold is that you will be surprised at what is in store for you. College prepares you to deal with the unexpected that characterizes all our lives.

figure 1.1

Choosing College

These are the most frequently cited reasons that first-year college students gave for why they enrolled in college when asked in a national survey.

Source: Eagan, K., Stolzenberg, E. B., Ramirez, J. J., Aragon, M. C., Suchard, M. R., & Hurtado, S. (2014). *The American Freshman: National Norms Fall 2014.* Los Angeles: Higher Education Research Institute, UCLA.



> "Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire."
>
> **William Butler Yeats, quoted in "*Congressional Record, V. 150, PT. 6, April 20, 2004 to May 4, 2004*" U.S. Congress, Government Printing Office, 2009.**

- **You'll be better prepared to live in a world of diversity.** The racial and ethnic composition of the United States is changing rapidly. Whatever your ethnicity, chances are you'll be working and living with people whose backgrounds, lifestyles, and ways of thinking may be entirely different from your own. You cannot be prepared for the future unless you understand others and their cultural backgrounds—as well as how your own cultural background affects you.

community service
Making contributions to the society and community in which you live.

service learning
Courses that allow a student to engage in community service activities while getting course credit for the experience.

- **You'll learn to lead a life of community service.** In its broadest sense, **community service** involves making contributions to the society and community in which you live. College provides you with the opportunity to become involved in community service activities, and in some cases even getting course credit for it—a process called **service learning**. College also allows you to develop the skills involved in acting toward others with *civility* and respectful, courteous behavior.
- **You'll make learning a lifelong habit.** Higher education isn't the end of your education. There's no job you'll have that won't change over time, and you'll be required to learn new skills. College starts you down the path to lifelong learning.
- **You'll understand the meaning of your own contributions to the world.** No matter who you are, you are poised to make your own contributions to society and the world. Higher education provides you with a window to the past, present, and future, and it allows you to understand the significance of your own contributions. Your college education provides you with a compass to discover who you are, where you've been, and where you're going.

In short, there are numerous benefits for attending college. To help you attain these benefits, it's time to introduce you to a process that will help you achieve success, both in college and in life beyond: P.O.W.E.R. Learning.

Journal Reflections

My School Experiences

Throughout this book, you will be given opportunities to write out your thoughts. These opportunities—called **Journal Reflections**—offer a chance to think critically about the chapter topics and record your personal reactions to them. As you create your reflections, be honest—to yourself and to your instructor.

Completing these Journal Reflections provides a variety of benefits. Not only will you be able to mull over your past and present academic experiences, you'll begin to see patterns in the kinds of difficulties—and successes!—you encounter. You'll be able to apply solutions that worked in one situation to others. And one added benefit: You'll get practice in writing.

If you save these entries and return to them later, you may be surprised at the changes they record over the course of the term. You can either write them out and keep an actual journal, or create your journal electronically.

1. Think of one of the successful experiences you've had during your previous years in school. What was it?

2. What made the experience successful? What did you learn from your success?

3. Think of an experience you had in school that did not go as you had hoped, and briefly describe it. Why did it occur?

4. What could you have done differently to make it successful? What did you learn from it?

5. Based on these experiences of academic success and failure, what general lessons did you learn that could help you be a more successful student in the future?

» LO 1.2

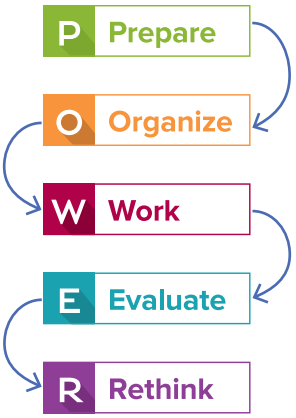
P.O.W.E.R. Learning:

The Five Key Steps to Achieving Success

P.O.W.E.R. Learning itself is merely an acronym—a word formed from the first letters of a series of steps—that will help you take in, process, and make use of the information you'll acquire in college. It will help you to achieve your goals, both while you are in college and later, after you graduate.

Prepare, **O**rganize, **W**ork, **E**valuate, and **R**ethink. That's it. It's a simple framework but an effective one. Using the systematic framework that P.O.W.E.R.

P.O.W.E.R. Learning
A system designed to help people achieve their goals, based on five steps: Prepare, Organize, Work, Evaluate, and Rethink.



P.O.W.E.R. Plan

Learning provides (which is illustrated in the P.O.W.E.R. Plan diagram) will increase your chances of success at any task, from writing a college paper to purchasing your weekly groceries.

Keep this in mind: P.O.W.E.R. Learning isn't a product that you can simply pull down off the bookshelf and use without thinking. P.O.W.E.R. Learning is a process, and you are the only one who can make it succeed. Without your personal investment in the process, P.O.W.E.R. Learning consists of just words on paper.

Relax, though. You already know each of the elements of P.O.W.E.R. Learning, and you may discover that you are already putting this process, or parts of it, to work for you. You've graduated from high school and been accepted into college. You may have also held down a job, had a first date, and registered to vote. Each of these accomplishments required that you use strategies of P.O.W.E.R. Learning. What you'll be doing throughout this book is becoming more aware of these strategies and how they can be used to help you in situations you will encounter in college and beyond.

P Prepare

Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu said that travelers taking a long journey must begin with a single step.

But before they even take that first step, travelers need to know several things: what their destination is, how they're going to get there, how they'll know when they reach the destination, and what they'll do if they have trouble along the way. In the same way, you need to know where you're headed as you embark on the intellectual journeys involved in college. Whether it be a major, long-term task, such as college attendance, or a more limited activity, such as getting ready to complete a paper due in the near future, you'll need to prepare for the journey.

Setting Goals

Before we seek to accomplish any task, all of us do some form of planning. The trouble is that most of the time such planning is done without conscious thinking, as if we are on autopilot. However, the key to success is to make sure that planning is systematic.

The best way to plan systematically is to use goal-setting strategies. In many cases, goals are clear and direct. It's obvious that our goal in washing dishes is to have the dishes end up clean. We know that our goal at the gas station is to fill the car's tank with gas. We go to the post office to buy stamps and mail letters.

Other goals are not so clear-cut. In fact, larger and more complicated tasks (such as going to college) may involve a variety of different kinds of goals.

What's the best way to set appropriate goals? Here are some guidelines:

long-term goals
Aims relating to major accomplishments that take some time to achieve.

short-term goals
Relatively limited steps toward the accomplishment of long-term goals.

- **Set both long-term and short-term goals. Long-term goals** are aims relating to major accomplishments that take some time to achieve. **Short-term goals** are relatively limited steps you would take on the road to accomplishing your long-term goals. For example, one of the primary reasons you're in college is to achieve the long-term goal of getting a degree. But to reach that goal, you have to accomplish a series of short-term goals, such as completing a set of required courses, taking a series of elective courses, and choosing a major. Even these short-term goals can be broken down into shorter-term goals. In order to complete a required course, for instance, you have to accomplish short-term goals, such as completing a paper, taking several tests, and so on. For practice in setting long- and short-term goals, complete **Try It! 2**.

2 WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS?

Try It! P O W E R

Before you begin any journey, you need to know where you are going. To plan your academic journey—and your later career—you first need to set goals. *Short-term goals* are relatively limited objectives that bring you closer to your ultimate goal. *Long-term goals* are aims relating to major accomplishments that take more time to achieve.

In this *Try It,* think about your short- and long-term academic goals for a few minutes, and then list them. Because short-term goals are based on what you want to accomplish in the long term, first identify your long-term goals. Then list the short-term goals that will help you reach your long-term goals. An example is provided for each kind of goal:

Long-Term Goal #1: Get a college degree

Related Short-Term Goals:

- Complete four courses with a grade of B or above each term.
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Long-Term Goal #2: _____

Related Short-Term Goals:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Long-Term Goal #3: _____

Related Short-Term Goals:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Long-Term Goal #4: _____

Related Short-Term Goals:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Long-Term Goal #5: _____

Related Short-Term Goals:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

After you complete the chart, consider how easy or difficult it was to identify your long-term goals. How many of your long-term goals relate to college, and how many to your future career? Do any of your short-term goals relate to more than one long-term goal?

> "Goal setting, as far as I can see it, is simply a state of mind, a way of thinking about things. A goal setter makes sure he accomplishes what he needs to accomplish."
>
> **Gottesman, G. (1994). *College Survival.* NY: Macmillan. P. 70.**

- **Recognize that who you are determines your goals.** Goal setting starts with knowing yourself. As you'll see later when we focus on understanding yourself and your values—those qualities that you hold most desirable—it is self-knowledge that tells you what is and is not important to you. This understanding of yourself will help you keep your goals in focus and your motivation up when things get tough.
- **Make sure goals are realistic and reasonably attained.** We'd all like to win Olympic gold medals or be multimillionaires or write best-selling novels. Few of us are likely to achieve such goals.

Be honest with yourself. There is nothing wrong with having big dreams. But it is important to be realistically aware of all that it takes to achieve them. If our long-term goals are unrealistic and we don't achieve them, the big danger is that we may wrongly reason that we are inept and lack ability and use this as an excuse for giving up. If goals are realistic, we can develop a plan to attain them, spurring us on to attain more.

- **State goals in terms of behavior that can be measured against current accomplishments.** Goals should represent some measurable change from a current set of circumstances. We want our behavior to change in some way that can usually be expressed in terms of numbers—to show an increase ("raise my grade point average 10 percent") or a decrease ("reduce wasted time by two hours each week") or to be maintained ("keep in touch with my out-of-town friends by sending four text messages each month"), developed ("participate in one workshop on critical thinking"), or restricted ("reduce my phone expenses 10 percent by speaking and texting less").

College is not an end-point, but part of a lifelong journey.
Source: © Purestock/Superstock

- **Choose goals that involve behavior over which you have control.** We all want world peace and an end to poverty. Few of us have the resources or capabilities to bring either about. On the other hand, it is realistic to want to work in small ways to help others, such as by becoming a Big Brother or Big Sister or by volunteering at a local food bank.
- **Take ownership of your goals.** Make sure that the goals you choose are your goals, and not the goals of your parents, teachers, brothers and sisters, or friends. If you're attending college only because others have told you to, and you have no commitment of your own, you'll find it hard to maintain the enthusiasm—not to mention the hard work—required to succeed.
- **Identify how your short-term goals fit with your long-term goals.** Your goals should not be independent of one another. Instead, they should fit together into a larger dream of who you want to be. Every once in a while, step back and consider how what you're doing today relates to the kind of person you would ultimately like to be.

To get more practice in using these goal-setting principles, consider the goals that underlie taking a particular college class in which you are currently enrolled. You probably have several goals for each course you are taking this term. Completing **Try It! 3** will give you a chance to evaluate them.

3 Course Goals

Try It! P O W E R

Think about one of the classes that you are taking this term. List your goals for the class in the first column below:

Goals for Class	Goals in Order of Importance

The goals you've listed most likely range from the specific ("passing the class with a good grade") to the more general and vague ("becoming educated in the subject matter of the class").

Now, rank order them to determine which are the most important to you. Note that some of these goals may be short-term goals ("get a decent grade") and some represent longer-term goals ("complete all college requirements"). In addition, your goals may be specific ("get an A in the course") or relatively vague ("do well in the class").

Now consider the following:

- What is the difference between those goals that are most important to you and those that are least important to you?
- Are your goals mostly short-term or long-term?
- How specific are your goals?
- What implications might your different goals have for your future success in the course?

WORKING IN A GROUP

Compare your goals for the course with those of other students and consider the similarities and differences.

O Organize

By determining where you want to go and expressing your goals in terms that can be measured, you have already made a lot of progress. But there's another step you must take on the road to success.

The second step in P.O.W.E.R. Learning is to organize the tools you'll need to accomplish your goals. Building upon the goal-setting work you've undertaken in the preparation stage, it's time to determine the best way to accomplish the goals you've identified.

How do you do this? Suppose you've decided to build a set of bookshelves for one room in your house. Let's say that you've already determined the kind of bookshelves you like and figured out the basic characteristics of the ones you will build (the preparation step in P.O.W.E.R. Learning). The next stage involves gathering the necessary tools, buying the wood and other building materials, sorting the construction supplies, and preparing the room for the shelving project—all aspects of organizing for the task.