

**SKIP DOWNING**

# On Course

Strategies for Creating Success in College and in Life

seventh edition

# Choices of Successful Students

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SUCCESSFUL STUDENTS . . .	STRUGGLING STUDENTS . . .
<p><b>1. . . . accept personal responsibility,</b> seeing themselves as the primary cause of their outcomes and experiences.</p>	<p><b>1. . . .</b> see themselves as victims, believing that what happens to them is determined primarily by external forces such as fate, luck, and powerful others.</p>
<p><b>2. . . . discover self-motivation,</b> finding purpose in their lives by discovering personally meaningful goals and dreams.</p>	<p><b>2. . . .</b> have difficulty sustaining motivation, often feeling depressed, frustrated, and/or resentful about a lack of direction in their lives.</p>
<p><b>3. . . . master self-management,</b> consistently planning and taking purposeful actions in pursuit of their goals and dreams.</p>	<p><b>3. . . .</b> seldom identify specific actions needed to accomplish a desired outcome. And when they do, they tend to procrastinate.</p>
<p><b>4. . . . employ interdependence,</b> building mutually supportive relationships that help them achieve their goals and dreams (while helping others do the same).</p>	<p><b>4. . . .</b> are solitary, seldom requesting, even rejecting, offers of assistance from those who could help.</p>
<p><b>5. . . . gain self-awareness,</b> consciously employing behaviors, beliefs, and attitudes that keep them on course.</p>	<p><b>5. . . .</b> make important choices unconsciously, being directed by self-sabotaging habits and outdated life scripts.</p>
<p><b>6. . . . adopt lifelong learning,</b> finding valuable lessons and wisdom in nearly every experience they have.</p>	<p><b>6. . . .</b> resist learning new ideas and skills, viewing learning as fearful or boring rather than as mental play.</p>
<p><b>7. . . . develop emotional intelligence,</b> effectively managing their emotions in support of their goals and dreams.</p>	<p><b>7. . . .</b> live at the mercy of strong emotions such as anger, depression, anxiety, or a need for instant gratification.</p>
<p><b>8. . . . believe in themselves,</b> seeing themselves as capable, lovable, and unconditionally worthy human beings.</p>	<p><b>8. . . .</b> doubt their competence and personal value, feeling inadequate to create their desired outcomes and experiences.</p>

# On Course





# On Course

Strategies for Creating Success in College and in Life

**Seventh Edition**

**SKIP DOWNING**



Australia • Brazil • Japan • Korea • Mexico • Singapore • Spain • United Kingdom • United States

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**On Course: Strategies for Creating Success  
in College and in Life, Seventh Edition**

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***To Carol, my compass***





# Contents



Look for the **Wise Choices in College** feature to help you learn the **essential study skills** necessary to succeed in college—reading, note-taking, studying, memorizing, test taking, and writing.


---

Preface	xv
Acknowledgments	xxv
Travel with Me	xxvii


---

## **1** Getting On Course to Your Success 1

<b>Taking the First Step</b>	2
What Is Success?	2
The Power of Choice	3
Write a Great Life	4
Assess Yourself	5
Forks in the Road	10
A Few Words of Encouragement	10
<b>Journal Entry 1</b>	12
<i>One Student's Story</i> Jalayna Onaga	13
<b>Understanding the Culture of Higher Education</b>	13
Culture Shock	15
The Culture of Higher Education	15
Choices and Culture	18
<b>Journal Entry 2</b>	19
<b>Becoming an Active Learner</b>	21
How the Human Brain Learns	21
Three Principles of Deep and Lasting Learning	22
The CORE Learning System	25
<b>Journal Entry 3</b>	27

<i>One Student's Story</i> Kase Cormier	28
On Course Principles <b>AT WORK</b>	29
 <b>BELIEVING IN YOURSELF</b> Develop Self-Acceptance	31
Self-Esteem and Core Beliefs	31
Know and Accept Yourself	32
<b>Journal Entry 4</b>	33
<b>Wise Choices in College</b> College Customs	34

## 2 Accepting Personal Responsibility 39

<b>CASE STUDY IN CRITICAL THINKING</b> The Late Paper	40
<b>Adopting a Creator Mindset</b>	41
Victim and Creator Mindsets	42
Responsibility and Culture	43
Responsibility and Choice	44
<b>Journal Entry 5</b>	46
<i>One Student's Story</i> Brian Moore	47
<b>Mastering Creator Language</b>	47
Self-Talk	48
The Language of Responsibility	51
<b>Journal Entry 6</b>	53
<i>One Student's Story</i> Aleksandr Kanevskiy	54
<b>Making Wise Decisions</b>	55
The Wise Choice Process	55
<b>Journal Entry 7</b>	59
<i>One Student's Story</i> Freddie Davila	60
Personal Responsibility <b>AT WORK</b>	61
 <b>BELIEVING IN YOURSELF</b> Change Your Inner Conversation	63
The Curse of Stinkin' Thinkin'	63
Disputing Irrational Beliefs	65
Stereotype Threat	66
<b>Journal Entry 8</b>	67
<i>One Student's Story</i> Dominic Grassetth	68

**Wise Choices in College** Reading 69

Reading: The Big Picture 69

Before Reading 70

While Reading 71

After Reading 73

**3****Discovering Self-Motivation** 75**CASE STUDY IN CRITICAL THINKING** Popson's Dilemma 76**Creating Inner Motivation** 77

A Formula for Motivation 78

Value of College Outcomes 80

Value of College Experiences 81

**Journal Entry 9** 83*One Student's Story* Chee Meng Vang 83**Designing a Compelling Life Plan** 84

Roles and Goals 85

How to Set a Goal 86

Discover Your Dreams 87

Your Life Plan 88

**Journal Entry 10** 89**Committing to Your Goals and Dreams** 90

Commitment Creates Method 91

Visualize Your Ideal Future 92

How to Visualize 93

**Journal Entry 11** 93*One Student's Story* James Terrell 94Self-Motivation **AT WORK** 95**BELIEVING IN YOURSELF** Write a Personal Affirmation 98

Claiming Your Desired Personal Qualities 99

Living Your Affirmation 100

**Journal Entry 12** 101*One Student's Story* Donna Ludwick 102**Wise Choices in College** Taking Notes 103

Taking Notes: The Big Picture 103

Before Taking Notes 104

While Taking Notes 105

After Taking Notes 109

## 4

**Mastering Self-Management** 111**CASE STUDY IN CRITICAL THINKING** The Procrastinators 112**Acting on Purpose** 113

Harness the Power of Quadrant II 113

What to Do in Quadrants I and II 115

**Journal Entry 13** 116*One Student's Story* Jason Pozsgay 117**Creating a Leak-Proof Self-Management System** 118

Time and Culture 118

Monthly Calendar 119

Next Actions List 120

Tracking Form 121

Waiting-For List 121

Project Folder 121

The Rewards of Effective Self-Management 122

**Journal Entry 14** 123*One Student's Story* Allysa LePage 127**Developing Self-Discipline** 127

Staying Focused 128

Being Persistent 129

**Journal Entry 15** 131*One Student's Story* Holt Boggs 132Self-Management **AT WORK** 134**BELIEVING IN YOURSELF** Develop Self-Confidence 136

Create a Success Identity 136

Celebrate Your Successes and Talents 137

Visualize Purposeful Actions 137

**Journal Entry 16** 139*One Student's Story* Ashley Freeman 140**Wise Choices in College** Organizing Study Materials 141

Organizing Study Materials: The Big Picture 141

Before Organizing Study Materials 141

While Organizing Study Materials 142

After Organizing Study Materials 146

## 5 Employing Interdependence 149

**CASE STUDY IN CRITICAL THINKING** Professor Rogers' Trial 150

**Creating a Support System** 151

Seek Help from Your Instructors 152

Get Help from College Resources 152

Create a Project Team 153

Start a Study Group 153

**Journal Entry 17** 156

*One Student's Story* Jason Matthew Loden 157

**Strengthening Relationships with Active Listening** 157

How to Listen Actively 158

Use Active Listening in Your College Classes 159

**Journal Entry 18** 160

**Respecting Cultural Differences** 161

Showing Respect 162

**Journal Entry 19** 166

Interdependence **AT WORK** 167

**BELIEVING IN YOURSELF** Be Assertive 169

Leveling 169

Making Requests 171

Saying "No" 171

**Journal Entry 20** 172

*One Student's Story* Amy Acton 174

**Wise Choices in College** Rehearsing and Memorizing Study Materials 175

Rehearsing and Memorizing Study Materials: The Big Picture 175

Before Rehearsing and Memorizing Study Materials 176

While Rehearsing and Memorizing Study Materials 176

After Rehearsing and Memorizing Study Materials 179

## 6 Gaining Self-Awareness 181

**CASE STUDY IN CRITICAL THINKING** Strange Choices 182

**Recognizing when You Are Off Course** 183

The Mystery of Self-Sabotage 183

Unconscious Forces 184

**Journal Entry 21** 185

<i>One Student's Story</i>	Sarah Richmond	186
<b>Identifying Your Scripts</b>		186
Anatomy of a Script		187
How We Wrote Our Scripts		188
Self-Defeating Habit Patterns		190
<b>Journal Entry 22</b>		191
<i>One Student's Story</i>	James Florioli	192
<b>Rewriting Your Outdated Scripts</b>		192
The Impact of Outdated Beliefs		193
Doing the Rewrite		194
<b>Journal Entry 23</b>		194
<i>One Student's Story</i>	Annette Valle	198
Self-Awareness	<b>AT WORK</b>	199
<b>BELIEVING IN YOURSELF</b>	Write Your Own Rules	201
Three Success Rules		202
<b>Journal Entry 24</b>		203
<i>One Student's Story</i>	Brandee Huigens	204
<b>Wise Choices in College</b>	Taking Tests	205
Taking Tests: The Big Picture		205
Before Taking Tests		205
While Taking Tests		206
After Taking Tests		212
<b>7</b>	<b>Adopting Lifelong Learning</b>	215
<b>CASE STUDY IN CRITICAL THINKING</b>	A Fish Story	216
<b>Developing a Learning Orientation to Life</b>		217
Growth Mindsets and Fixed Mindsets		218
How to Develop a Growth Mindset		220
<b>Journal Entry 25</b>		222
<i>One Student's Story</i>	Jessie Maggard	223
<b>Discovering Your Preferred Ways of Learning</b>		224
Self-Assessment: How I Prefer to Learn		224
<b>Journal Entry 26</b>		230
<i>One Student's Story</i>	Melissa Thompson	230

<b>Employing Critical Thinking</b>	231
Constructing Logical Arguments	232
Asking Probing Questions	232
Applying Critical Thinking	233
<b>Journal Entry 27</b>	235
Lifelong Learning <b>AT WORK</b>	236
<b>BELIEVING IN YOURSELF</b> Develop Self-Respect	239
Live with Integrity	239
Keep Commitments	241
<b>Journal Entry 28</b>	243
<b>Wise Choices in College</b> Writing	244
Writing the Big Picture	245
Before Writing	245
While Writing	248
After Writing	250

## 8

**Developing Emotional Intelligence** 253

<b>CASE STUDY IN CRITICAL THINKING</b> After Math	254
<b>Understanding Emotional Intelligence</b>	255
Four Components of Emotional Intelligence	256
Knowing Your Own Emotions	257
<b>Journal Entry 29</b>	258
<i>One Student's Story</i> Lindsey Beck	258
<b>Reducing Stress</b>	259
What Is Stress?	259
What Happens when Stress Persists?	260
Unhealthy Stress Reduction	260
Healthy Stress Reduction	261
Choose Your Attitude	267
<b>Journal Entry 30</b>	268
<i>One Student's Story</i> Jaime Sanmiguel	268
<b>Creating Flow</b>	269
College and Flow	270
Work and Flow	271
<b>Journal Entry 31</b>	272
Emotional Intelligence <b>AT WORK</b>	273



 **BELIEVING IN YOURSELF** Develop Self-Love 275

Design a Self-Care Plan 275

**Journal Entry 32** 278

*One Student's Story* Wynda Allison Paulette 279

**Wise Choices in College** Managing Money 280

Managing Money: The Big Picture 281

Increase Money Flowing In 281

Decrease Money Flowing Out 284

---

**9**

**Staying On Course to Your Success** 289

**Planning Your Next Steps** 290

Assess Yourself, Again 290

**Journal Entry 33** 297

*One Student's Story* Stephan J. Montgomery 298

**Bibliography** 299

**Index** 303

# Preface



*On Course* is intended for college students of any age who want to create success in college and in life. Whether students are taking a student success or first-year seminar course, a writing course, or an “inward-looking” course in psychology, self-exploration, or personal growth, *On Course* is an instruction manual for dramatically improving the quality of their outcomes and experiences. In each chapter, students learn essential study skills; however, that’s just the beginning. Through self-assessments, articles, guided journals, case studies in critical thinking, and inspiring stories from fellow students, *On Course* empowers students with time-proven strategies for creating a great life—academic, personal, and professional. Students learn the techniques that have helped many thousands of students create extraordinary success!

I am grateful that in the years since its first publication in 1996, *On Course* has become a market leader in the crowded field of student success texts. Increasingly, educators are finding (as I have) that empowering students to become active, responsible learners produces significant increases in both student academic success and retention. My goal is to make this new edition of *On Course* even more helpful to the success of students and educators alike.

## What’s New in This Edition of *On Course*: Highlights

- **NEW! EXPANDED COVERAGE OF DIVERSITY.** Rather than simply adding one article about this important issue, information about diversity is incorporated in many places throughout the text. The intent of this approach is to emphasize that we are all different from others in many ways, and these differences often influence the choices we make, and thus the outcomes and experiences we create. By way of example, an article titled “Respecting Cultural Differences,” beginning on page 161, will help students understand the growing diversity they will encounter in college and beyond, along with a number of strategies for showing respect for people different from themselves.

---

The retention results we are getting indicate the information in the text is impacting student behaviors. The students are applying the concepts and making changes in their thinking and practices. We just completed a student focus group of students who had formerly taken an FYE class. Student responses indicate they continue to apply what was learned in the FYE class to their thinking and actions into their 2nd semester.

*Linda McMeen,  
North Hennepin Community  
College*

---

I appreciate the time, effort, and thoughtfulness that went into making these [diversity] additions. *On Course* has always been a fantastic textbook. I wasn’t sure it could be better. But I have to say I can’t wait to start teaching with the new edition.

*Lory Conrad,  
University of Arkansas - Fort Smith*

- **NEW! ARTICLE ON THE CULTURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION.**

The culture of higher education is unique and therefore challenging to many students. This article and the accompanying Journal Entry 2 on pages 18–20 will help students understand what a “culture” is, how their college or university culture is different from previous cultures they may have experienced (e.g., high school), and what choices they can make to thrive in the culture of higher education. Armed with this information, students will soon feel like natives of their new culture.

- **NEW! DISCUSSION OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY.** Many educators are concerned about cheating in higher education. Woven into an article about personal integrity and self-respect, this discussion presents the author’s own experiences with cheating and three powerful reasons why cheating is a bad choice for any college student to make.

- **NEW! ARTICLE ON DEVELOPING A LEARNING ORIENTATION TO LIFE.** Recent findings by psychologist Carol Dweck and others reveal the impact of growth and fixed mindsets on learning. This article presents the practical application of this important research, providing students with strategies for becoming effective lifelong learners (not to mention earning better grades).

- **ONE STUDENT’S STORY—FIVE NEW STORIES ADDED!** A popular feature in earlier editions, these short essays are authored by students who used *On Course* strategies to improve the quality of their college outcomes and experiences. All 25 stories show the positive and dramatic results possible when students apply what they learn in this course to overcome the multitude of challenges that can sabotage success in college, and beyond.

---

I think these are very powerful stories. . . . It’s good for students to hear that other students have faced the same struggles that they are going through and they have achieved success.

*Kathryn Burk,  
Jackson Community College*

## What’s New in This Edition of *On Course*: Chapter by Chapter

### Chapter 1

- New article and journal entry on understanding the culture of higher education, which includes a discussion of culture shock, the culture of higher education, and how culture informs choices we make, and features a new chart, “A Dozen Differences Between High School and College Culture”
- New *One Student’s Story* by Kase Cormier, Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College, North Carolina
- Revisions to the Self-Assessment:
  - Revised #30: My intelligence is something about myself that I can improve.

- Revised #36: I am aware of how to show respect to people who are different from me (race, religion, sexual orientation, age, etc.).
- Revised #44: I seldom interact with people who are different from me.
- Revised #62: Everyone is born with a certain amount of intelligence, and there's not really much you can do to change that.
- Revised Question 1 in Journal Entry 3
- New college customs exercises in *Wise Choices in College: College Customs* offers more practice and variety

## Chapter 2

- Revised “Adopting a Creator Mindset” article and added section on “Responsibility and Culture” addressing cultural mindsets and Victim and Creator mindsets, with Rosa Parks presented as an example of someone with a Creator mindset
- Revised instructions and prompts for Journal Entries 5 and 8
- New section on stereotype threat within “Believing in Yourself: Change Your Inner Conversation” that addresses the “stinkin’ thinkin’” that can affect cultural groups, with suggestions for reducing the negative impact of stereotype threats
- New *One Student’s Story* and art by Freddie Davila, The Victoria College, Texas

## Chapter 3

- New *One Student’s Story* by James Terrell, Appalachian State University, North Carolina
- Revised “A Formula for Motivation” section to discuss how deep culture influences the value placed on achieving a college education and expectations of success in college
- Revised instructions for Journal Entries 11 and 12

## Chapter 4

- New *One Student’s Story* by Ashley Freeman, Copper Canyon College, California
- New “Time and Culture” section discusses how cultures differ in their beliefs and attitudes about time and what the college culture’s expectations are about time
- Revised coverage in “Monthly Calendars” section to address new technologies on smart phones that help with time management
- New waiting-for list and project folder strategies for time management
- Revised instructions and additional prompts for Journal Entry 15

- New discussion about the skepticism some hold about visualizing in “Visualize Purposeful Actions” section
- Revised prompt 2 for Journal Entry 16

### Chapter 5

- New information in “Creating a Support System” section that introduces individualistic and collectivist cultures and how the beliefs of these cultures impact students’ decisions on independence versus interdependence
- New article and journal entry on “Respecting Cultural Differences,” including a section on how to show respect to those who are different from us

### Chapter 6

- New information in “Identifying Your Scripts” about how cultures contribute to our unconscious scripts and programming

### Chapter 7

- Revised “Developing a Learning Orientation to Life” article discussing growth mindsets and fixed mindsets and how to develop a growth mindset
- Revised Journal Entry 25 with two choices for prompts about which to write
- Revised the terminology of learning styles to “preferred ways of learning,” as well as the title of the self-assessment inventory to “Learning Preference Inventory”; additional explanation of preferred ways of learning is included as well.
- New coverage of academic integrity in “Believing in Yourself: Develop Self-Respect,” including the costs of academic dishonesty and cheating

### Chapter 8

- New *One Student’s Story* and poem by Wynda Allison Paulette, National Park Community College, Arkansas

### Chapter 9

- A retrospective pre-assessment added to the self-assessment. Self-assessments have the built-in problem of accuracy caused by the natural urge to choose answers that make us “look good.” A retrospective pre-assessment allows students to identify at the end of the course where they believe they were at both the beginning of the course (retrospectively) and at the end. Such an assessment tends to make a comparison of pre- and post-test scores more valid.

## Proven Features of *On Course*

The seventh edition includes all of the best features of *On Course*, updated and revised from the previous edition.

- **SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRES.** *On Course* begins and ends with a self-assessment questionnaire. By completing the initial questionnaire, students can see areas of growth that need attention. By completing the concluding questionnaire, students see their semester's growth. Students have the option of completing the questionnaire either in the text or online, available on the College Success CourseMate for *On Course*. An advantage of the online version is that it gives an immediate printout of scores and assures that scores are accurate.
- **ARTICLES ON PROVEN SUCCESS STRATEGIES.** Thirty-three short articles explain powerful strategies for creating success in college and in life. Each article presents a success strategy from influential figures in psychology, philosophy, business, sports, politics, and personal and professional growth. In these articles, students learn the “secrets” of extraordinarily successful individuals.
- **CORE LEARNING SYSTEM.** All good learners employ four principles that lead to deep and lasting learning. Students learn how to use these four principles to create their own system for learning any subject or skill.
- **WISE CHOICES IN COLLEGE ADDRESSING STUDY SKILLS STRATEGIES.** To expand on the CORE Learning System, students are introduced to dozens and dozens of powerful strategies that they can use to improve their learning and raise their grades.
- **GUIDED JOURNAL ENTRIES.** A guided journal entry immediately follows each article, giving students an opportunity to apply the success strategy they just learned to enhance their results in college and in life. Numerous journal directions have been revised based on student and reviewer feedback, making the directions easier to follow and the writing more valuable for gaining personal and academic insights.
- **AN ARTICLE AND SEVEN CASE STUDIES ADDRESSING CRITICAL THINKING.** When polled, virtually every college educator agrees that critical thinking is essential for success in college and in life. Through *Case Studies for Critical Thinking* as well as an article and journal entry on critical thinking skills, students learn effective ways to solve challenging problems. They also learn valuable reasoning skills that help them create and analyze persuasive arguments. These skills sharpen their thinking ability and provide them with greater control over the quality of their lives.

---

The Wise Choice Process is one of the most valuable lessons from *On Course*. It provides students with the tools that help them make informed choices and think more critically about situations. I think that students are improving because the process helps them think through their options and analyze the results, which leads to positive changes.

*Taunya Paul,  
York Technical College*

---

Journaling is the heart and soul of *On Course*. It helps me check the pulse of my students on a regular basis. I have countless testimonies from students who describe the journaling process as “life-changing.” The most reluctant students who ultimately “give in” to journaling often become the most avid supporters of *On Course*.

*Gail Janecka,  
The Victoria College*

---

I absolutely love these [*Case Studies for Critical Thinking*] and spend a lot of time with each of them. My favorite is “A Fish Story” and start my semester with this one. I get students thinking about professors' expectations, their own expectations, motivation, taking the initiative, being prepared for class, and being organized.

*Cindy Thorp,  
SUNY Alfred, College of Technology*

The At Work sections give students a specific venue to see how the soft skills they acquire will transfer to career success. Semester after semester students will share how their work situation improved as a result of what they learned and tried from the At Work sections. These sections are a natural fit in the *On Course* chapters, and they are packed with pertinent information.

Gail Janecka,  
The Victoria College

- **ON COURSE PRINCIPLES AT WORK.** These sections show how important the *On Course* success strategies are for choosing the right career, getting hired, and succeeding in the work world.
- **QUOTATIONS.** Marginal quotations express the timeless wisdom of famous and not-so-famous people regarding the success strategies under consideration throughout the text.

## Support Materials for Students and Instructors

For additional information or for help with accessing support materials related to *On Course*, contact your Cengage Learning sales representative. If you need help finding your sales representative, visit <http://academic.cengage.com> and select “Find Your Rep” at the top of the page.

### SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS

- **COLLEGE SUCCESS COURSEMATE.** *On Course* includes College Success CourseMate, a complement to your textbook. College Success CourseMate includes an integrated eBook as well as interactive teaching and learning tools, including an online version of the self-assessment, quizzes, Wise Choices, Respecting Differences, *One Student’s Story* videos, and more. It also includes Engagement Tracker, a first-of-its-kind tool that monitors student engagement in the course. CourseMate is available as a bundle item with *On Course* or can be purchased separately by students at Cengage Learning’s Online Bookstore, [www.cengagebrain.com](http://www.cengagebrain.com).
- **APLIA FOR ON COURSE.** Aplia is an online, auto-graded, and assignable homework system that improves learning by increasing student effort and engagement—without requiring more work from the instructor. Aplia for *On Course* helps students dive deeper into the concepts presented in the textbook. Engaging, interactive assignments ensure that students meet learning objectives, while automatically graded assignments offer immediate and constructive feedback. The problems and activities in Aplia for *On Course* guide students in developing the critical skills they need to earn better grades, achieve their potential, and chart a course for the future. To view a demo of Aplia for *On Course*, visit [www.aplia.com/collegesuccess](http://www.aplia.com/collegesuccess).
- **EBOOK.** An eBook is available for *On Course*. Students can download the complete *On Course* textbook at a cost savings at Cengage Learning’s Online Bookstore, [www.cengagebrain.com](http://www.cengagebrain.com).
- **COLLEGE SUCCESS PLANNER.** Instructors can package the *On Course* textbook with this 12-month week-at-a-glance academic planner. The

College Success Planner assists students in making the best use of their time both on and off campus, and includes additional reading about key learning strategies and life skills for success in college. Ask your Cengage Learning sales representative for more details.

## SUPPORT FOR INSTRUCTORS

- **NEW! ANNOTATED INSTRUCTOR'S EDITION.** To help guide instructors to the many ideas found within the Facilitator's Manual, the Annotated Instructor's Edition (ISBN: 9781133606857) provides specific cross-references directly in the margins to ideas and activities available in the Facilitator's Manual provided by Melanie Marine of the University of Wisconsin–Oshkosh and Catherine Eloranto of Clinton Community College.
- **REVISED FACILITATOR'S MANUAL.** The Facilitator's Manual, now offered both in a printed version (ISBN: 9781133606857) and online at the Instructor Companion Site (see below for more information), offers educators specific classroom activities and suggestions from Skip Downing for using *On Course* in various kinds of courses, and it endeavors to answer questions that educators might have about using the text. Additionally, the Facilitator's Manual now includes “best practices” provided by *On Course* instructors; additional study skills activities written by Melanie Marine of the University of Wisconsin–Oshkosh; new diversity activities provided by LuAnn Wood and Christina Davis, both of Century College; suggestions for teaching in an online environment written by Pratima Sampat-Mar of Pima Medical Institute; and a guide for how to successfully integrate the College Success Factors Index (CSFI) with *On Course* written by Gary Williams of Crafton Hills College. One of the most popular elements of the *On Course Facilitator's Manual* is the numerous in-class exercises that encourage students' active exploration of the success strategies presented in the text. These learner-centered exercises include role-playing, learning games, dialogues, demonstrations, metaphors, mind-mappings, brainstorming, questionnaires, drawings, skits, scavenger hunts, and many others.
- **UPDATED INSTRUCTOR COMPANION SITE.** This website (free to adopters) provides educators with many resources to offer a course that empowers students to become active, responsible, and successful learners. Read the Facilitator's Manual (which is also offered in a printed version, as explained above), download PowerPoint slides, view the content from the DVD *On Course: A Comprehensive Program for Promoting Student Academic Success and Retention*, and find a useful transition guide for educators who used previous editions of *On Course*. To access instructor digital resources, such as the Instructor Companion Site or instructor access for the College Success CourseMate site for *On Course*, follow these steps:



1. Visit **login.cengage.com**.
2. If you have not previously created a faculty account, choose “Create a New Faculty Account” and follow the prompts.
3. If you have created a faculty account previously, log in with your email address or user name and password.
4. Search for *On Course* to add the available additional digital resources to your bookshelf.

You will always need to return to **login.cengage.com** and enter your email address and password to sign in to access these resources. Use this space to write down your email address or user name and password below:

**Email Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Password:** \_\_\_\_\_

- **REVISED! POWER LECTURE CD-ROM FOR ON COURSE.** The Power-Lecture (ISBN: 9781133606871) contains a brand new test bank prepared by Stephanie Kratz of Heartland Community College in the ExamView test-generating software, enhanced instructor PowerPoint slides, revised by Lalanya Ennis of College of the Mainland, and a PDF of the Facilitator’s Manual. Use the dynamic software to create customized exams specific to your class!
- **ON COURSE: A COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM FOR PROMOTING STUDENT ACADEMIC SUCCESS AND RETENTION DVD.** This DVD (ISBN: 0547002173) provides instructors with an overview of the problems that keep today’s capable students from being successful, complete with an explanation by Skip Downing about how *On Course* differs from other student success approaches. Additional features on this DVD include a description of the extensive *On Course* learner-centered resources, videos of three students presenting their *One Student’s Story* essays that appear in the text, and a sample *On Course* learner-centered activity, facilitated by Skip Downing. Following the activity, college and university educators discuss how this same activity positively affected their students. Presented in short chapters, parts of this DVD are intended for instructors and other parts are perfect for showing to students. Content from this DVD is available for immediate viewing on the Instructor Companion Site.
- **WEBTUTOR™ ON WEBCT / WEBTUTOR™ ON BLACKBOARD.** Jump-start your course with customizable, rich, text-specific content within your course management system, including interactive quizzes, videos, an eBook, and more. Ask your Cengage Learning sales representative for more details.
- **ASSESSMENT TOOLS.** If you’re looking for additional ways to assess your students, Cengage Learning has additional resources for you to

consider. For more in-depth information on any of the following items, contact your Cengage Learning sales representative.

- **College Success Factors Index:** The College Success Factors Index (CSFI) 2.0, developed by Edmond Hallberg and Kaylene Hallberg, is an online survey that students complete to assess their patterns of behavior and attitudes in 10 key areas. These areas have been proven by research to affect student outcomes for success in higher education. Accessed online, the CSFI is a useful assessment tool for demonstrating the difference your college success course makes in students' academic success. At the start of the course, the CSFI helps assess incoming students and allows you to tailor your course topics to meet their needs. As a post-test, it provides an opportunity for you (and your students) to measure progress. In the new version, an Early Alert indicator flags students who are most at risk of getting off course in college. This information enables you to intervene at the beginning of the semester to increase students' likelihood of success—and improve retention rates. CSFI 2.0 also has text-specific remediation for *On Course* that guides students to appropriate pages in the textbook for added support. For more information about CSFI, visit our website at [www.cengage.com/success/csfi2](http://www.cengage.com/success/csfi2).
- **Noel-Levitz College Student Inventory:** *The Retention Management System™ College Student Inventory* (CSI; from Noel-Levitz) is an early-alert, early-intervention program that identifies students with tendencies that contribute to dropping out of school. Students can participate in an integrated, campus-wide program. Cengage Learning offers you three assessment options that evaluate students on 19 different scales: Form A (194 items), Form B (100 items), or an online etoken that provides access to Form A, B, or C (74 items). Advisors are sent three interpretive reports: the Student's Report, the Advisor/Counselor Report, and the College Summary and Planning Report.
- **The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® (MBTI®) Instrument<sup>1</sup>:** The MBTI is the most widely used personality inventory in history—and it is also available for packaging with *On Course*. The standard Form M self-scorable instrument contains 93 items that determine preferences on four scales: Extraversion–Introversion, Sensing–Intuition, Thinking–Feeling, and Judging–Perceiving. Now offered online with the MBTI Complete®. Instructors do not need a certification to administer the MBTI Complete®. Students take the assessment on their own and automatically receive a complete interpretation of the results. In addition, you will receive *16 Paths to Student Success*, which includes lesson plans detailing how to incorporate MBTI® personality styles into your instruction on time management, communication, learning styles, and study skills.

<sup>1</sup>MBTI and Myers-Briggs Type Indicator are registered trademarks of Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc.

- **CENGAGE LEARNING'S TEAMUP FACULTY PROGRAM CONSULTANTS.** An additional service available with this textbook is support from **TeamUP Faculty Program Consultants**. For more than a decade, our consultants have helped faculty reach and engage first-year students by offering peer-to-peer consulting on curriculum and assessment, faculty training, and workshops. Our consultants are higher education professionals who provide full-time support in helping educators establish and maintain effective student success programs. They are available to help you to establish or improve your student success program and provide training on the implementation of our textbooks and technology. To connect with your TeamUP Faculty Program Consultant, call 1-800-528-8323 or visit [www.cengage.com/teamup](http://www.cengage.com/teamup).
- **ON COURSE WORKSHOPS AND CONFERENCE.** Skip Downing, author of *On Course*, offers faculty development workshops for all educators who want to learn innovative strategies for empowering students to become active, responsible, and successful learners. These highly regarded professional development workshops are offered at conference centers across North America, or you can host a one- to four-day event on your own campus. An online graduate course (3 credits) is available as a follow-up to two of the workshops. Additionally, you are invited to participate in the annual *On Course* National Conference, where hundreds of learner-centered educators gather to share their best practices. For information about these workshops, graduate courses, and the national conference (including testimonials galore), go to [www.oucourseworkshop.com](http://www.oucourseworkshop.com). Questions? Email [workshop@OnCourseWorkshop.com](mailto:workshop@OnCourseWorkshop.com).
- **ON COURSE NEWSLETTER.** All college educators are invited to subscribe to the free *On Course* Newsletter. More than 50,000 educator-subscribers worldwide receive emails with innovative, learner-centered strategies for engaging students in deep and lasting learning. To subscribe, simply go to [www.oucourseworkshop.com](http://www.oucourseworkshop.com) and follow the easy, one-click directions. Or you can email a request to [workshop@oucourseworkshop.com](mailto:workshop@oucourseworkshop.com).

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# Travel with Me



*On Course* is the result of my own quest to live a rich, personally fulfilling life and my strong desire to pass on what I've learned to my students. As such, *On Course* is a very personal book, for me and for you. I invite you to explore in depth what success means to you. I suggest that if you want to achieve your greatest potential in college and in life, dig deep inside yourself, where you already possess everything you need to make your dreams come true.



During my first two decades of teaching college courses, I consistently observed a sad and perplexing puzzle. Each semester I watched students sort themselves into two groups. One group achieved varying degrees of academic success, from those who excelled to those who just squeaked by. The other group struggled mightily; then they withdrew, disappeared, or failed. But, here's the puzzling part. The struggling students often displayed as much academic potential as their more successful classmates, and in some cases more. What, I wondered, causes the vastly different outcomes of these two groups? And what could I do to help my struggling students achieve greater success?

Somewhere around my 20th year of teaching, I experienced a series of crises in both my personal and professional lives. In a word, I was struggling. After a period of feeling sorry for myself, I embarked on a quest to improve the quality of my life. I read, I took seminars and workshops, I talked with wise friends and acquaintances, I kept an in-depth journal, I saw a counselor, I even returned to graduate school to add a master's degree in applied psychology to my doctoral degree in English. I was seriously motivated to change my life for the better.

If I were to condense all that I learned into one sentence, it would be this: **People who are successful (by their own definition) consistently make wiser choices than people who struggle.** I came to see that the quality of my life was essentially the result of all of my previous choices. I saw how the wisdom (or lack of wisdom) of my choices influenced, and often determined, the outcomes and experiences of my life. The same, of course, was true for my struggling students.

For two and a half decades, I have continued my quest to identify the inner qualities that empower a person to make consistently wise choices, the