

ANNOTATED INSTRUCTOR'S EDITION

# FOCUS

## ON COLLEGE SUCCESS

Constance Staley  
University of Colorado, Colorado Springs

# Constance Staley

Thirty-how-many-years? she thought.

*What a long time to work at one job in one place.* But she had learned so much over that time, especially about students and about teaching, about learning and about knowing.

When she first began, the campus consisted of a few buildings and a dirt parking lot. Now it was a thriving community with thousands of students and buildings going up everywhere. *Of course, you can enhance your career by moving from one school to another;* she thought to herself, *but you can also learn a lot by sticking with a good thing over a long period of time.* So that's what she'd done. There had been brief excursions, working in private industry and teaching students in the former Soviet Union as a Fulbright Scholar. But for the most part, Constance Staley had spent her entire career as a professor on one campus, University of Colorado, Colorado Springs. As the campus had "grown up," so had she as a teacher. It wasn't unusual for her to run into her students everywhere—in restaurants, at the movies, or in stores. "Remember me?" they'd say. "You were my professor twenty-five years ago." She'd smile politely and nod. But the truth was she couldn't always exactly remember. Her brain was very full of students after all this time.

Connie had always been a student herself. As a kid, her favorite game was "playing school" with friends. Growing up in a military family, she'd gone to plenty of different schools herself—ten in twelve years. By the time she started kindergarten, she'd already seen much of the world and was bilingual. Some people might have called her a nerd or a geek or a teacher's pet, or remarked about how she always worked for extra credit and lingered over her homework. But the truth was, she loved to learn.

Over her years as a professor, she'd worked with thousands of students. She concentrated on being the kind of teacher who listened and cared, who sent encouraging e-mails to students when they needed them, or congratulatory ones when they made brilliant contributions in class, or sometimes "reality check" e-mails when they needed an academic pep talk because they weren't doing so well. She loved the give and take, walking up the aisles of her classroom as she worked to engage everyone, trying to be dramatic or funny, convincing students that this class wasn't about how much *she* knew. It was about how much *they* could learn.



About halfway through her career, Connie decided to focus on first-year students by directing the Freshman Seminar Program on her campus. She saw that many students eased into college as if they were finally in their element. But then there were students like Ethan Cole in this book, who lost his focus and considered dropping out of college, and Gloria Gonzales, who wasn't sure college would be worth it or whether her first-year seminar class could really teach her anything new. And there were students like Katie Alexander, a kinesthetic learner who found it hard to engage in material that wasn't naturally interesting to her, or Anthony Lopez, who partied too much and studied too little.

But it was challenges like the ones presented by these students—and all the others in this book—that motivated Constance Staley to write *FOCUS on College Success*. She knew that getting a college degree was their key to a better life, a more fulfilling career, and most importantly, achieving their potential. She knew it was her job to help them through the rough patches and find the motivation within themselves to accomplish something they'd always be proud of. She knew that whether they were 18 or 48, college would introduce them to new worlds where they, too, could “grow up” as students and become learners for life. The Roman poet Manlius said it well centuries ago: “The end depends on the beginning.”

Since her early days of teaching, Constance Staley has seen substantial change. Today's students are busy, impatient multi-taskers who want *efficient* learning. Nearly one-third of them admit on national studies that they do just enough academic work to get by, despite their desire for fast-track, high-paying careers. They want to learn what *they* see as valuable, *their* way, with *results*. Overwhelmingly, they work at jobs in order to finance college, crowd their days with too many obligations, and don't slow down long enough to hone their metacognitive skills. They see a college education as a *product*, rather than a *process*. Returning students are stretched, often nearly to the breaking point, in multiple directions. No matter their age, many beginning students today simply don't have the time, the motivation, or the skills they need to focus. And on top of these formidable challenges, today's students often come to college with emotional issues that add another layer of complexity for instructors. Simply put, many require considerable support: academically, psychologically, and emotionally.

In her work with institutions across the country, Connie has seen the credibility of first-year seminars challenged by results-oriented administrators, skeptical faculty, and students who assume they “already know this stuff.” Yet she has witnessed their power to effect change in thousands of students, firsthand, because she has developed engaging teaching strategies that work.

Her goal was to build much of what she has learned into a single tool: a book that would almost teach itself, freeing instructors to do what they need to do with their students, collectively and individually. According to nearly 100 reviewers, some of the strengths of *FOCUS on College Success* are its ability to build rapport with students, engage them, unlock intrinsic motivation, demonstrate that learning is taking place, and help them learn how to focus. The visual display on the following pages will walk you through *FOCUS on College Success*, feature by feature.

It's been said that teaching is the ultimate act of optimism. When a Gloria Gonzales, an Ethan Cole, or a Kia Washington is engaged and succeeds, we know why we do what we do as instructors. And we continually challenge ourselves to do it better.

*FOCUS* is for all the first-year students who sit in your classrooms, and for you in your own personal and professional journey as their teacher.

## ● ASK THE AUTHOR: Constance Staley



**1. Many first-year students today are not avid readers. How have you addressed this instructor challenge in *Focus on College Success, Concise Edition*?**

I call today's students "Generation Why." *Why is this course important? Why should I learn how to study when I've already been doing it for years?* First-year students need a college success textbook that not only tells them *what* to do, but also *why* doing

these things is important. No matter their age, students are savvy, busy, and pragmatic. They want a college success text to meet them where they are, understand the complexity of their lives, and give them tools to learn better and faster. That's the philosophy behind *FOCUS*.

**2. How will *FOCUS* help get students more engaged in a course that they often don't feel they need to take?**

For real learning to take place, students must find personal meaning in what they read. As much as it is about metacognition—thinking about thinking and learning about learning—*FOCUS* is about students. It stars a cast of my own students (and one colleague), like a stage play. One student "actor" is featured in each chapter's opening "FOCUS Challenge Case." All the cast members reappear throughout the book, so that readers feel they're getting to know the cast as they read. Students are naturally interested in other students, and the case studies provide a non-threatening way to discuss problems that readers themselves may be facing.

**3. Many colleges and universities seem to be struggling with retention and are trying to understand why many students don't return after their first year. How can *FOCUS* help with this?**

As an introductory activity in *FOCUS*, students complete an Entrance Interview (on paper or online) that helps instructors flag potential risk factors for individual students

and profile the class as a whole. Similarly, at the end of the term, students can complete an Exit Interview that informs them and their instructors about how they've progressed. These two tools measure the gap between initial *expectations* and actual *experience*. Instructors can design interventions based on issues that surface, and then measure their degree of success in implementing them. No other textbook employs this type of pre- and post-test tool, and an "early alert" system can make all the difference when it comes to retention.

**4. Credibility seems to be an issue with first-year seminar courses; students and administrators sometimes question the value of the college success course. How will your book help address the credibility issue?**

Each chapter of *FOCUS* starts with a "Focus Challenge Case" to which students respond in a non-threatening way, giving suggestions to resolve the real-life conflict before having read the chapter. Then, throughout each chapter, readers are prompted to identify what they already know about particular topics *before* they read about them with the Challenge → Reaction questions. After they read, they are asked to apply the information to themselves as learners through the Insight→Action questions. The Challenge→Reaction→Insight→Action system in *FOCUS* demonstrates to students that learning is taking place, and the extensive research base (invisible to students) assures faculty readers that *FOCUS* is grounded in the scholarship of teaching and learning.

**5. Today's incoming students have varied learning styles: many are kinesthetic, some are visual, and few are aural and read/write. How do you ensure that students identify their learning style and gain the skills necessary to improve their learning throughout their college career?**

*FOCUS* informs students about their own learning styles right away so that they can streamline their efforts and translate between the teaching "language" spoken by their instructors and learning "language" they themselves prefer. My suspicion is that many students who drop out of college are kinesthetic learners who don't

know how to navigate an academic world that is predominantly aural and read/write. *FOCUS* encourages students to realize that learning is a *process*, and helps them customize their learning, just as they customize *products* in their lives—everything from MP3 players and cell phones to specialty coffee drinks! Students are encouraged to become responsible learners, apply *FOCUS* material to their toughest course, and tailor their learning to the level of challenge that is right for them.

**6. Because they lack focus, many first-year students become discouraged, find college to be less exciting than they expected, or recognize that they are not well prepared for the sustained investment college requires over time. How does *FOCUS* help solve this problem of motivation?**

*FOCUS* asks students at the beginning of every chapter to assess their level of motivation, interest, and readiness to begin (via Readiness Checks). At the end of every chapter, readers are asked to respond to a similar set of questions retrospectively (by use of Reality Checks). In addition to helping students develop realistic expectations of what it takes to learn, they are reminded that *they* are central to the learning process and that *they* must be fully invested. *FOCUS* also uses research on emotional intelligence and intrinsic motivation to get at underlying affective issues that influence college success. Many students today go to college because their parents want them to, because their friends are going, or because it's the expected "next step." They don't realize how much their own motivation to propel themselves toward a degree is at the heart of their success. Also, students may not realize that EQ can be as, or more, important than IQ in achieving their goals.

**7. Most instructors have multiple course preps per semester, and though they want to make the college success course as engaging and interactive as possible, they just don't have time to write or research a plethora of classroom activities. How will your book help?**

*FOCUS* is designed as a learning system with built-in motivational tools, built-in activities (many from my re-

source book, *50 Ways to Leave Your Lectern*), and built-in journal/discussion prompts. Before I began writing, and continuously along the way, I asked myself, "What would I, as an instructor, want in a first-year seminar textbook?" Having worked with so many students over so many years, I know first-hand the range of challenges instructors face and what would give them what they need—conveniently and comprehensively—to do the best job they can. As a first-year seminar course should be, the book has been "VARKed," by including, for example:

- Visual: memorable, unusual photographs with powerful, famous quotations as captions
- Aural: content-rich, and compelling chapter summary podcasts with a humorous twist to capture student interest
- Read/write: research-based, comprehensive chapters on timely topics with new subtopics written for today's students
- Kinesthetic: real-life students as cast members and provocative, innovative web content

**8. How do you spice up lectures and discussions in your classroom and keep yourself engaged?**

Many college success instructors have great passion for what they do. They teach a first-year seminar as an overload or extra duty and they find great fulfillment in witnessing student transformations during the first year of college. My advice? Share ideas with your colleagues. Exchange ideas about what works and what doesn't. Energize each other! I have found that my work with faculty across the country has been a powerful way for me to learn. *FOCUS* gave me an opportunity to give back what I've learned from my students and from other instructors. My goal is to continue that learning process through *FOCUS*.



## HOW DOES *FOCUS* ADDRESS THE ISSUE OF...

Picture this: You sit down to work on a challenging homework assignment. After a few minutes, you think, *Man, I'm thirsty*, so you get up and get a soda. Then you sit back down to continue your work. A few minutes later, you decide that some chips would go nicely with your soda and you head to the kitchen. Again, you sit down to face the task before you, as you concentrate more on eating than on working. Ten minutes go by and a nagging thought starts taking over: *Must do laundry*. Up you go again and throw a load of clothes in the washer. Before long you're wondering where all the time went. Since you only have an hour left before your next class, you think, *Why bother getting started now? Doing this project will take much more time than that, so I'll just start it tomorrow*. Despite good intentions at the beginning of your work session, you've just succeeded in accomplishing zip, nadda, nothing.

See page 94

## ENGAGEMENT?

**Voice:** *FOCUS* offers a conversational tone that is accessible, non-condescending, and treats readers as adults. It builds rapport with student readers, and works to convince them of key concepts rather than simply telling them.

**What you told us...** "The writing is real; students will know this author is telling them the straight truth of what they need to do to succeed in college and beyond."

— Marty Marty, Missouri State University

"Connie Staley's 'voice' comes through so clearly! Having been to many of her workshops, I can hear her saying these words as she directs this exercise! Like many, many other people who learn from her, I listen to her 'voice'!"

— Sally Firmin, Baylor University



### Gloria Gonzales



It was her first day of college. As Gloria Gonzales walked to her first class, "College Success," she had mixed feelings: excitement, anticipation, anxiety, and apprehension. She wondered if she'd meet any interesting people, if she'd like her instructor, and if she'd learn anything important in this class. After all, she'd gotten good grades in high school without even trying hard. If she just put in some effort, she thought, she'd be successful in college, too. How can you study something like "College Success" for a whole term? she asked herself.

To be honest, Gloria thought she probably already knew most of what there was to learn in this course, and if she didn't, so what? She knew what she had to do to get good grades—everyone does—but she didn't always choose to do it. That's all. School was part of her life, but it wasn't always her top priority. At least this course would probably be easier than her math course or her composition course with all that writing.

Gloria wasn't the first person in her family to go to college. Her sister had attempted it, but she'd dropped out after her first term and gotten a job. "College, who needs it?" she'd exclaimed. "I want to start earning good money right away, not waste time on this!" There were times when Gloria thought her sister might be right. Her sister certainly seemed able to afford some of the things Gloria had always wanted herself. Was college really going to be worth all the time, effort, and expense? But everyone she knew was going to college; it was the right thing to do after high school, and everyone expected it of her.

Gloria's family didn't have much money. They were sacrificing to help finance her college education. She'd better perform, they'd said. They'd told her point-blank that her sister had set a bad example, and that her first-term grades had better not include anything lower than a B. Frankly, Gloria was beginning to feel a twinge of performance pressure. Of all the children in her family, her sister had always been considered the smartest, and she'd given up after only one term. If her sister couldn't do it, how could Gloria? If she were to succeed, exactly what would it take?

Despite her worries as she walked down the hallway toward the classroom, Gloria was sure of one thing: She looked good today—really good. Her sister's skirt fit perfectly; the new outfit was definitely her color, and thankfully it was a good hair day. Gloria had always been able to make heads turn.

Research it all, Gloria knew what she wanted, anyway. She was going into the fashion industry. She'd dreamed of that since she was ten years old. The worst was exactly what she'd need to do to make

2 Chapter 3 • Building Success, setting Goals

**FOCUS Challenge Cases:** Readers have the opportunity to read and react to a challenge in each case study and revisit it at the end of the chapter to see if/how their perceptions about the case have changed. These provide an applied, real-life, kinesthetic approach to learning, and allow students a "safe" way to discuss problems they may be facing themselves.

**Teaching tip:** Use these cases (and the accompanying follow-up questions) to spur discussion in the classroom or as brief writing assignments.

**What you told us...** "The case studies are fantastic. It is rare to read case studies that don't feel/sound contrived. These case studies are the most realistic that I have come across."

— Peg Adams, Northern Kentucky University

See page 2

**Activities and Self-Assessments:** *FOCUS* provides dozens of classroom-ready exercises, so you'll no longer have to locate or create them on your own.

**Teaching tip:** To get students into the book (and your course), assign the exercises and self-assessments. The Annotated Instructor's Edition provides ideas for using all the activities in the classroom, as well as suggesting additional activities.

**What you told us...** "The chapters are very interactive and require a lot more effort than just reading them. If well taught, the likelihood of engagement seems high."

— David Campagne, University of South Florida

See page 105-106

#### Exercise 5.1 And Just Why Is Critical Thinking Important?

Here is a list of reasons why it's important to improve your critical thinking skills. Beside each entry, mark the degree to which you'd like to concentrate your efforts as a college student, soon ready to enter a new career path. On a scale from 1 to 10 with 10 representing the highest degree, would you like to:

1. **\_\_\_\_\_ Become a more successful college student?** Most college courses require you to think critically (in answering essay questions, for example). In one study of over 1,100 college students, higher scores on critical thinking skills tests correlated highly with better grades.<sup>1</sup> There's even evidence that interaction with other students in co-curricular activities can help you develop as a critical thinker.<sup>2</sup> If you participate in a debate, serve as a panelist, organize a campus event, work on a campaign—all experiences outside the classroom—you can sharpen your ability to think critically, too.
2. **\_\_\_\_\_ Become a better citizen?** Critical thinking is the foundation of a strong democracy. Voters must think critically about candidates' messages and their likelihood of keeping campaign promises. It's easy to talk about balancing the budget, or lowering taxes, but the truth is these highly complex tasks are very challenging to carry out. The American public must ask through information and examine the soundness of politicians' arguments in order to keep our democracy strong.
3. **\_\_\_\_\_ Become a better employee?** A workforce of critical—and creative—thinkers helps the American economy thrive and individuals become more successful. The U.S. Department of Labor reports that today's jobs require employees who can deal with complexity, learn and perform multiple tasks, analyze and deal with a wide variety of options, identify problems, perceive alternative approaches, and select the best approach.<sup>3</sup> Employers are "practically begging" for employees who can "think, collaborate, communicate, coordinate, and create."<sup>4</sup>
4. **\_\_\_\_\_ Become a more savvy consumer?** In today's marketplace, everyone wants your dollars. If you acted on every ad you read in magazines or watch on television, you'd run out of money very quickly. You're told you need whiter teeth, colored hair, softer skin, strong muscles, and a host of other things in order to be attractive. Critical thinking will help you evaluate offers, avoid slick come-ons, and buy responsibly.
5. **\_\_\_\_\_ Build stronger relationships?** Critical thinking helps us understand our own and others' actions and become more responsible communication. Whether with friends or romantic partners, relationships take work. Sometimes you have to figure out what your partner really means or listen between the lines for important clues. You have to persuade your partner that you're right about something or convince him or her to act on a request. Actually, critical thinking is at the heart of every relationship you care about.
6. **\_\_\_\_\_ Become a lifelong learner?** Your education doesn't end when you get your diploma. In many ways the real exams begin afterward when you put your classroom learning to the test. And in today's world you must continue to learn as you transition through jobs to give your life more meaning—personally and professionally. According to American humanist Sydney Joseph Freedman, "Learning is what most adults will do for a living in the 21st century." You'll need to keep expanding your skills, no matter what your career is. Innovation and change are the watchwords of today's workplace, and continual learning is the only way to survive and thrive.<sup>5</sup>

## ● HOW DOES *FOCUS* ADDRESS THE ISSUE OF...

# CREDIBILITY?

**Challenge > Reaction > Insight > Action (CRIA) Learning System:** In this learning system,

1. a challenge is presented
2. initial reactions, perceptions, and misperceptions are uncovered
3. content/resources/new knowledge is presented, leading to new insights
4. final thoughts and discoveries lead to action/change.

This system demonstrates that learning is taking place. Students may assume they “know all this stuff” when they actually don’t. The CRIA system will also help students realize the value of the College Success course.

**Teaching tip:** Making use of this system will show students their existing level of understanding and what remains to be learned.

**What you told us...** “I like these activities a great deal. I think students respond particularly well to scales that they can take and get feedback on that tell them a little about themselves.”

— Kimberly Cummings, University of Tampa

### CHALLENGE ➡ REACTION

What are your core values? Review the following list and check off the items that you value. Don't spend too much time thinking about each one; just go with your initial gut reaction. For each item, ask yourself “Is this something that's important to me?”

<input type="checkbox"/> Health	<input type="checkbox"/> Wealth	<input type="checkbox"/> Financial wealth
<input type="checkbox"/> Fitness/Physical strength	<input type="checkbox"/> Independence	<input type="checkbox"/> Commitment
<input type="checkbox"/> Loyalty	<input type="checkbox"/> Honesty	<input type="checkbox"/> Compassion
<input type="checkbox"/> Academic achievement	<input type="checkbox"/> Children	<input type="checkbox"/> Leisure time
<input type="checkbox"/> Success	<input type="checkbox"/> Leadership	<input type="checkbox"/> Balance
<input type="checkbox"/> Happiness	<input type="checkbox"/> Family	<input type="checkbox"/> Friendship
<input type="checkbox"/> Social life	<input type="checkbox"/> Marriage/Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/> Recognition
<input type="checkbox"/> Athletics	<input type="checkbox"/> Spirituality	<input type="checkbox"/> Status
<input type="checkbox"/> Creativity	<input type="checkbox"/> Variety	<input type="checkbox"/> Wisdom
<input type="checkbox"/> Meaningful work	<input type="checkbox"/> Challenge	<input type="checkbox"/> Time spent alone
<input type="checkbox"/> Adventure	<input type="checkbox"/> Personal growth	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (list here)

Now review all of the items you checked off and circle the five that are most important to you at this point in your life. Then rank them by putting a number next to each of the five circled values with number one as your top priority. Finally, take stock. Is this the person you want to be? Is there anything about your values that you would like to change? If so, what's keeping you from making this change?

See page 17

Every chapter of *FOCUS* is research rich, although hidden from students via endnotes.

**Heavily Research-Based:** Instructors will appreciate that the text is built on a solid foundation of research and that the advice to students is current and relevant.

**Teaching tip:** Knowing that the advice and methods are backed by evidence helps support the credibility of the course as well as give students (if they are interested) proof that these skills lead to success.

**What you told us...** “The author uses respected research among several disciplines more broadly and more effectively than other current books on this subject matter.”

— Marty Marty, Missouri State University

## HOW DOES *FOCUS* ADDRESS THE ISSUE OF...

### READINESS CHECK

Before beginning this chapter, take a moment to answer these questions. Your answers will help you assess how ready you are to focus.

1 = not very/not much/very little/low 10 = very/a lot/very much/high

Based on reading the "You're about to discover..." list and skimming this chapter, how much do you think you probably already know about the subject matter?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

How much do you think this information might affect your college success?

1 2 3 4

### REALITY CHECK

On a scale of 1 to 10, answer these questions now that you've completed this chapter.

1 = not very/not much/very little/low 10 = very/a lot/very much/high

In hindsight, how much did you really know about this subject matter before reading this chapter?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

How much do you think this information might affect your college success?

1 2 3 4

How long did it actually take you to complete this chapter (both the reading and writing tasks)? \_\_\_\_\_ Hour(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Minutes

Compare these answers to your answers from the "Readiness Check" at the beginning of this chapter. How might the gaps between what you thought before starting the chapter and what you now think affect how you approach the next chapter?

See pages 1 and 26

## MOTIVATION?

**Readiness Checks and Reality Checks:** Students learn to *FOCUS* on the material before them and narrow the gap between initial expectations and the reality of what's required to study successfully. These checks help students develop a more realistic approach to learning.

**Teaching tip:** Open and close a course topic with these checks to see where students stand before and after learning a topic. Eventually, assessing their readiness to learn may become ingrained and considered as they begin their academic work in any class.

**What you told us...** "Based on the students I've had the pleasure of working with in the past, they would approach this as a game... wanting to "win" by knowing it all at the conclusion of the lesson. This section also helps students to actually prepare for the chapter BEFORE the teacher goes over it (imagine that!)."

— Phebe Simmons, Blinn College

See page 21

**Emotional Intelligence (EI) Research** In 1988, Olympic swimmer Matt Biondi lost his first race only to win the gold in the next five. Martin Seligman, a psychologist from the University of Pennsylvania, had tested Biondi earlier that year and discovered that even when given negative feedback, Biondi went on to perform well. Seligman defines optimism by the way people describe their successes and failures.

**Emotional Intelligence (EI) Coverage:** Because they lack *FOCUS*, many first-year students become discouraged, find college to be less exciting than they expected, or recognize that they are not well prepared for the sustained investment college requires over time. Retaining first-year students is a serious concern on many campuses, and many students give up due to EI factors like discouragement or disillusionment.

**Teaching tip:** *FOCUS* includes considerable information on emotional intelligence since students' EQs, can be as important as their IQs to their college success.

**What you told us...** "I thought that the emotional intelligence section could be particularly useful to students in understanding the ways in which emotions can impact academics."

— Carrie L. Cokely, Meredith

**C CULTIVATE** Your Curiosity

**C CONTROL** Your Learning

**C CREATE** A Career Outlook

**C CHALLENGE** Yourself Quizzes

**AIMS (Academic Intrinsic Motivation Scale): Features throughout the book trigger intrinsic motivation (four C-Factors):**

1. the level of challenge in coursework (Challenge Yourself Online Quizzes)
  2. the level of control over outcomes (Control Your Learning: Your Toughest Class)
  3. the degree of curiosity prompted by coursework (Cultivate Your Curiosity)
  4. the extent of *FOCUS* on graduation and careers (Create a Career Outlook)
- The themes of motivation and personal responsibility (self-regulation) are in line with current research on today's students.

See page 11-12

**Teaching tip:** Assign the "Challenge Yourself Online Quizzes" as homework and ask students to hand in their results; use the "Control Your Learning" feature to schedule an office hours visit with each student to talk about applying course content to their toughest class.

**What you told us...** "The C boxes allow another way for students to engage. I like how they are used to provide deeper insight into the concepts...I really think these C boxes emphasize the value of learning—and help illustrate why this is important!"

— Allison Cumming-McCann, Springfield College



## HOW DOES *FOCUS* ADDRESS THE ISSUE OF...

### FOCUS ENTRANCE INTERVIEW

Although you may not have experienced life as a new college student for long, we're interested in how you expect to spend your time, what challenges you think you'll face, and your general views of what you think college will be like. Please answer thoughtfully.

#### INFORMATION ABOUT YOU

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student Number \_\_\_\_\_ Course/Section \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor \_\_\_\_\_

Gender \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

#### 1. Ethnic Identification:

- ☐ Native American/American Indian    ☐ Hispanic  
☐ Caucasian    ☐ African American  
☐ Asian or Pacific Islander    ☐ Prefer not to answer

#### 2. Is English your first (native) language?

☐ yes    ☐ no

#### 3. Where are you living this term?

- ☐ in campus housing    ☐ on my own  
☐ with my immediate family    ☐ other (please explain)  
☐ with a relative other than my immediate family

#### 4. Did your parents graduate from college?

- ☐ yes, both    ☐ neither  
☐ yes, father only    ☐ not sure  
☐ yes, mother only

#### 5. How many credit hours are you taking this term?

- ☐ 6 or fewer    ☐ 15-16  
☐ 7-11    ☐ 17 or more  
☐ 12-14

#### 6. Did you start college elsewhere before attending this school?

☐ yes    ☐ no

#### 7. In addition to going to college, do you expect to work for pay at a job (or jobs) this term?

☐ yes    ☐ no

#### 8. If so, how many hours per week do you expect to work?

- ☐ 1-10    ☐ 31-40  
☐ 11-20    ☐ 40+  
☐ 21-30

#### 9. Which of the following describes why you are working for pay this term? (Mark all that apply.)

- ☐ to pay for college tuition    ☐ to pay for child care  
☐ to pay for basic expenses that I need (rent, housing, food, etc.)    ☐ to pay for textbooks  
☐ to pay for extra expenses that I want (clothes, entertainment, etc.)    ☐ to save money for the future  
☐ to buy a car    ☐ to see how much I can make  
☐ to support a family    ☐ other (please explain)

## RETENTION?

**Entrance and Exit Interviews:** Data gathering instruments provide administrators and faculty with valuable data, evidence of students' expectations of college early in the term and their experience of college at the end of the course. No other text contains these tools to be used at the beginning and end of the First-Year Seminar course.

**Teaching tip:** Included in the front and back of every book, the data of these surveys can be used for one-on-one interviews at the beginning and end of the course, to identify risk factors for individual students, or shared with the class to foster discussion. Online versions are available from the companion web site.

**What you told us...** "The Entrance/Exit Interviews I think will be very effective in assisting students to truly evaluate themselves. Additional information gathered...will give instructors a better understanding of their students and their needs."

—Mercy Azeke, Norfolk State University

See page xxviii

**Career Integration:** The "*FOCUS* on Careers" feature shares an interview with a real professional working in a particular field, and it demonstrates how the content of the chapter has practical applications in that particular profession. These role models provide examples of healthy life management choices, which reinforce to students that today's choices create tomorrow's opportunities. Students value the content of their college success course more by seeing its practical use in the workplace.

**Teaching tip:** Ask students to complete "Create a Career Outlook" questions in each chapter, which will help them *FOCUS* on where their career interests lie and how their own personality type and skills apply to the featured career.

**What you told us...** "Reading true stories of real people in different careers will be extremely useful as students try to maneuver through their career choices. They will think back to these examples long after this textbook is not in their daily use; they will likely attempt to meet career standards as high as the professionals that they've read about."

—Rebecca Reed, Johnson & Wales University

### FOCUS ON CAREERS: Eric Sween, Psychologist



Courtesy of Eric Sween

#### Q1: What do you do in your work?

My specialization is in the psychological field known as narrative therapy—in other words, how people make meaning of the events in their lives. In my private practice I see both individuals and couples. People come into therapy for a wide variety of reasons, for example, when they feel stuck with something in their lives—some with unemployment, or relationships, or divorce. My responsibilities include listening, understanding people's perspectives, and helping them set and reach their goals. I especially value working with people who are at some sort of turning point in their lives.

#### Q2: What are the three most important skills in this career?

First, a therapist needs to be able to understand another person's perspective. Second, a therapist needs to be curious about people and to listen to them. And finally, it's important to do with each person you work with a solution and concrete plan that is empathized with. And so, a therapist needs additional resources. The need in order to reach the

See page 12

## ● HOW DOES *FOCUS* ADDRESS THE ISSUE OF...

# VARIED LEARNING STYLES?

### EXERCISE 2.3 VARK Activity

Complete the recommended activity for your preferred VARK learning modality. If you are multimodal, select more than one activity. Your instructor may ask you to (a) give an oral report on your results in class, (b) send your results to him or her via e-mail, (c) post them online, or (d) contribute to a class chat.



**Visual:** Think about a particular course or exam you studied for in the past. Create a personal chart that compares the learning strategies for each of the four VARK modalities you used and the degree of success you had using each one.



**Aural:** Interview another student who is a member of a campus honor society. Which VARK strategies does this student use and why? Determine whether these strategies would work for you.



**Read/Write:** Write a one-page summary of what you have learned about yourself as a result of reading this chapter.



**Kinesthetic:** If your campus has a Learning Center, visit it to gather additional information about your learning style. Apply what you have learned to create a plan to prepare for your next exam.

See page 48

**VARK:** Following the VARK assessment in Chapter 2, VARK activities at the end of each chapter will *FOCUS* on the four sensory modalities and learning. If students are multimodal, they will be encouraged to select activities from several modalities. Over the course of the term, these activities will provide students with an array of techniques to improve their learning in all their classes.

**Teaching tip:** Complete the VARK assessment in Chapter 2 either in the classroom or as a homework assignment to help students assess their learning style(s).

**What you told us...** “This is an excellent tool for self examination... I have had a number of students be quite surprised at the results of the VARK and how simple strategies (according to the results) enhance their learning.”

—Janet Breaker, Milwaukee Area Technical College

## Resources & Ancillaries

### Annotated Instructor's Edition

Written by Catherine Andersen of Gallaudet University, this Annotated Instructor's Edition of *FOCUS* helps instructors at any stage of their teaching careers succeed and provides the guidance needed with any new text. Among other notable strengths, Catherine is particularly recognized for her work in emotional intelligence in higher education. Annotations are categorized into five groups for particularly easy recognition, allowing instructors to pay attention to annotations they are most interested in:

- **Teachable Moments.** These annotations note places where instructors can pause to capitalize on chapter content by making particular points that enrich the learning environment.
- **Sensitive Situations.** These annotations point out places where an in-class discussion could generate potential discomfort in the learning environment. These annotations keep instructors from being caught off guard by these triggers and provide suggestions for how to handle these provocative teaching challenges.
- **Activity Options.** If instructors wish to pursue further active learning strategies in class, these annotations provide other ideas for a variety of ways to do this.
- **Chapter Crossover.** These annotations link material to that found in previous or upcoming chapters so that students tie together related content and understand the connectedness of knowledge.
- **Emotional Intelligence (EI) Research.** Many first-year instructors are interested in learning more about emotional intelligence, but aren't sure about exactly how it relates to the content of college success courses. These annotations make the connections and provide short summaries of related EI research.

### Instructor's Manual and Test Bank

Also written by Catherine Andersen of Gallaudet University, the Instructor's Manual serves as a quick guide to every chapter, providing all the frequently asked questions about how to teach the course, from what the main focus of every chapter should be to yet more activity options. Also included are a guide on creating a syllabus built around the text, instructions on making use of *FOCUS*' special features, and recommendations for keeping your course fresh and engaging. The online quizzes allow students to adjust the challenge level of the course by selecting easy, medium, and challenging questions to answer (following Bloom's taxonomy from simple to more cognitively complex questions).

### Power Lecture

Organized around the topics covered in the book, this easy-to-use tool helps you assemble, edit, and present tailored multimedia lectures. You can create a lecture from scratch, customize the provided templates, use the ready-made PowerPoint® slides as they are, or access videos from the resource center. Also included are JoinIn on TurningPoint slides to help make your class more interactive, ExamView files for test bank creation for every chapter, and the Instructor's Manual in pdf format.

### Resource Center

In addition to rich resources, additional in-class activities, and downloadable podcasts (pithy chapter summaries with a humorous twist), the website includes short "YouTube"-type vignettes, "Inside the *FOCUS* Studio," a mock television show, featuring the author and *FOCUS* cast members. These "What's the Big Idea?" streaming videos focus on seven chapters and how the chapter content can be made real and memorable to today's students.