

# College Learning and Study Skills



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Debbie Guice Longman

Rhonda Holt Atkinson

THIRD EDITION

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# College Learning And Study Skills

Debbie Guice Longman  
Southeastern Louisiana University

Rhonda Holt Atkinson  
Louisiana State University

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# Preface

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We wrote the first edition of *College Learning and Study Skills* to help students succeed and prosper in college. Specifically, we intended to help students develop strategies for time management, study skills, test taking, using their libraries, and writing research papers. In addition, we sought to accomplish four objectives: to provide information in a context suitable for post-secondary developmental learners; to help post-secondary developmental students become more active learners; to explain the mental processes involved in learning; and to incorporate recent theories and research into reading and study skill instruction at the post-secondary level.

We have been pleased by the response to the book. Instructors and students with whom we have spoken have felt, as we have, that the first edition of *CLASS* met these objectives. An additional survey of users of *CLASS* from around the country generally agreed. We realized, however, that revisions were needed to meet the changing needs of the students for whom the book was written.

*CLASS* (2E), revised using comments from users and reviewers, was enormously successful. Our goal for the third edition of *CLASS* is for it to also fulfill the needs of its users. In an effort to meet that goal, we have once again relied on information from the people who use the text—both instructors and students.

Many of the best features of *CLASS* (2E) remain in this text—for example, the Write to Learn and Group Learning Activity exercises remain; so does much of the information. Nonetheless, this edition of *CLASS* contains several new features. First, each chapter of *CLASS* (3E) continues to be refined; for example, the library chapter now contains information on computerized library searches. Approximately 75% of the exercises are new. Second, the text now contains a chapter on critical thinking. To include this new information, we specifically over-hauled the chapters on memory, listening and notetaking, and reading. Third, the vocabulary development activities are now much more than simple exercises which precede and come after a chapter. Vocabulary development in *CLASS* (3E) follows each chapter and contains two features: (1) information about vocabulary associated with the topic discussed in the chapter and (2) activities to

promote internalization of vocabulary concepts. Next, four new sample chapters provide reading experiences in content areas, and several new essays promote reading in other print forms.

A newly revised instructor's manual and computer program accompany this text. The computer disk, now easier for instructors and students to use, includes the following five programs: HIGH-LITE (indicating the importance of previewing and background knowledge); TESTER (reinforcing test-taking strategies); SCANNER (providing realistic practice in varying reading speed); ANALOGY (extending practice of complex word relationships); and HANGMAN (providing practice in determining the meanings of new words, using the context, and deriving meaning through structural analysis).

Although *CLASS* is designed for use in a post-secondary study skills course, it also can serve as the principal text for an advanced reading course or as a resource for English classes or learning assistance centers. It also may be used by the student independently.

The completion of any major project requires the assistance of many people. We wish first to thank our families who support and assist us in so many ways.

In addition, we wish to acknowledge the support of our colleagues at both SLU and LSU. To Alana Allen, we owe a debt of great magnitude—her work with permissions was inspired (perhaps by the desperation on our faces). Our heartfelt thanks goes to Clark Baxter and Joe Terry, whose support and encouragement never falter. In addition to our gratitude, Stacy Lenzen has earned our respect and friendship. Our hope is that her expected child grows to be as intelligent, courteous, and competent as she is. Finally, we acknowledge and thank our reviewers whose efforts made this manuscript the book it is:

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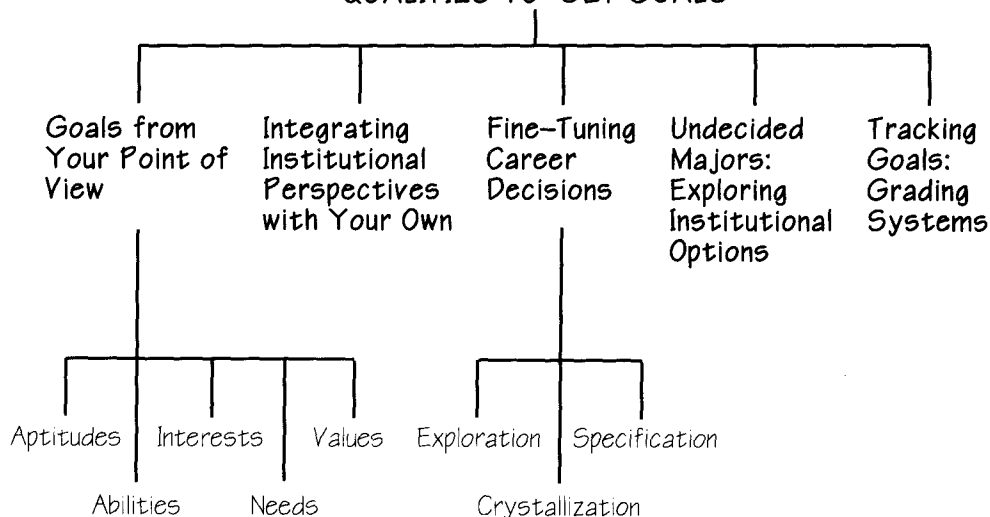
# Winning the Game of Higher Education

## OBJECTIVES

By the end of this chapter you will be able to do the following:

1. Set goals for academic success.
2. Identify the principle players at your institution: administrative units, faculty, and others.
3. Recognize the value of campus diversity.
4. Identify your learning strengths and weaknesses.

## ASSESSING PERSONAL QUALITIES TO SET GOALS



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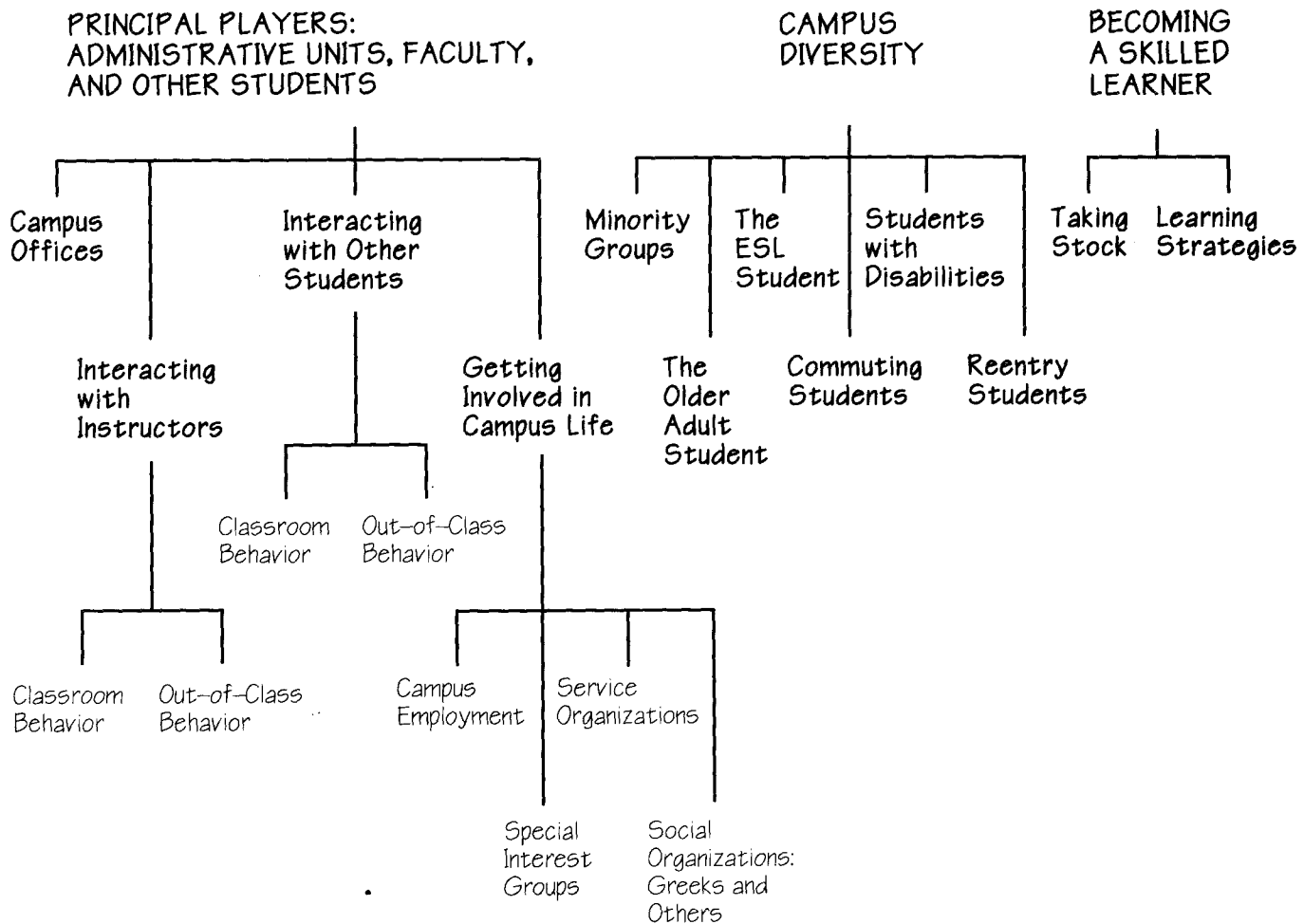
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## TERMS

abilities  
 aptitudes  
 aptitude tests  
 college catalog  
 credit hours  
 crystallization  
 curricula  
 ESL students  
 exploration  
 fantasy  
 free elective  
 grade point average  
 (GPA)  
 interests  
 interest inventory  
 intramural sports  
 needs  
 quality points  
 realistic  
 specification  
 tentative  
 values

**"Winning isn't everything; it's the only thing."**

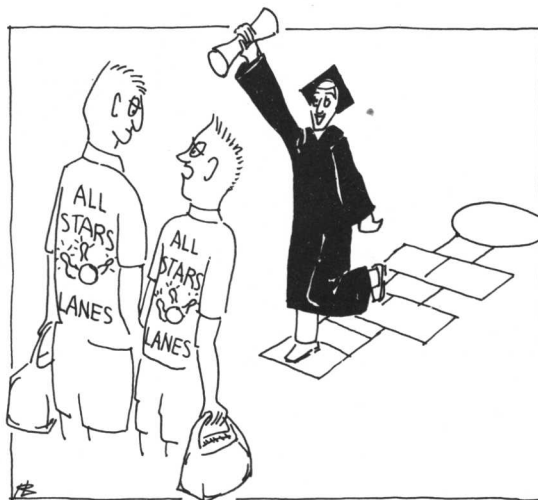
—VINCE LOMBARDI  
 Football coach

Winning the game of higher education is like winning any other game. It consists of the same basic process. First, you decide if you really want to play. If you do, you gear your attitudes and habits to learning, then learn the rules of the game. Next, you get into the game and become an active participant. Third, you learn about the other players—administrative units, faculty, and other students. Finally, you develop specific strategies to improve your playing skills. That's what this book is about. Whether you are a new, upper-class, transfer, or reentry student, if you play the game well, you win. If you don't, you're on the bench. Your success or failure depends on you.

## ASSESSING PERSONAL QUALITIES TO SET GOALS

Have you ever felt forced to do something "for your own good" that you really didn't want to do? Maybe you had to be in the school play or read aloud. Maybe you had to take a job you didn't like. How successful were you? How did you feel about it? When put in this position, most people do not succeed. They fail because the goal is not their own.

On the other hand, fulfilling another person's desires can help you be successful. Making good grades may not be your goal, but it may be one your family, your boss, or others have set for you. Your goal may be to please those people, not to make good grades. The results are the same, although the two goals are not.



*"Whaddaya mean it's not like bowling? Don't we get a few practice frames?"*

The key to winning the game of higher education is building your own desire to succeed. To do so, you examine why you are in school. If you are taking courses for any reason other than your desire for learning, your chances of success are lessened. Your chances of success improve if you find a way to make learning your goal.

Goal-setting is essential to achieving success, but some people fail to set goals because they simply don't know how. When it comes to making decisions that will affect the rest of their lives, many feel overwhelmed. Some even allow others to decide for them because it's easier. Many students seem to make decisions about their life goals in ways characterized by the people in Table 1.1. Of those people, only Vera "Sis" Tematic has the right idea about decision-making. Unlike the other characters, she reaches her decisions by following a set plan. Having a set plan like Vera "Sis" Tematic is both efficient and effective. You avoid such pitfalls as procrastination, impulsiveness, and lack of information. Eliminating such errors is essential in learning to make good decisions and setting appropriate and realistic goals.

### WRITE TO LEARN

Using Table 1.1, decide which decision-making role (e.g. Willy Nilly, Mia Fraid) best describes you. On a separate sheet of paper, discuss whether this role changes when you make decisions about work, school, and family. If so, how does it change and why?

To set academic goals, think about your life's ambitions. Do you want to graduate with a degree? Do you want to get a better job? Do you want to make more money? Do you want to find a career you enjoy? Do you want to learn skills for a career change? You must determine how much time and effort you must spend studying to achieve what you want to do in life.

### GOALS FROM YOUR POINT OF VIEW

Identifying your goals is easier said than done. It requires close examination of the factors that contribute to your point of view—your **aptitudes**, **abilities**, **interests**, **needs**, and **values** (See Figure 1.1). It also requires you assess your point of view from your institution's perspective.

估计  
**Aptitudes**  
天赋

Aptitudes reflect what you could do—your potential. They are natural or inborn traits that precede ability. These traits may be visible or hidden. Visible traits are ones you already recognize and have developed. Hidden traits are parts of your personality you have not yet explored. For example, you may have an aptitude for music. If you