

CONCISE EDITION

# Cornerstone

Building on Your Best

• Patricia G. Moody •

Rhonda J. Montgomery

Robert M. Sheffield





# CORNERSTONE

Building on Your Best

*Concise Edition*

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*The University of South Carolina*

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*The Community College of Southern Nevada*



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## DEDICATION

*Cornerstone is dedicated to our families and close friends who have helped us, nurtured us, believed in us, and encouraged us to become the best we can be.*

*For Rhonda:*

*Mick Montgomery, Jackie Montgomery, Sharlene Redd, Charles and Sharon Delph*

*For Pat:*

*My personal hero, my mother, Annie Laura Bryan Ginn*

*For Robb:*

*Great friends in a new city, Curtis Roe, Lynn Forkos, William Pulse, Dell Griffin*



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Education is not preparation for life, education is life itself.  
John Dewey, educator

CORNERSTONE was born out of our desire to help new college students develop the skills that would enable them to be successful in college. Seldom will you read a textbook as honest and straightforward as we have tried to make this one. The words that you read and the activities provided in this worktext have not come easily to us. They are the result of our collective experiences over our many years of teaching and administration in higher education. We hope our words will touch you deeply and provide you insight that will enable you to make it to graduation and beyond.

We hope that our words will give you peace as well as cause you some discomfort; teach you and challenge you; hold you and let you go. It is also our hope that you will approach these activities with new eyes; yours is a different world now. To experience that world, you'll need to be open and willing to participate. Without your participation, the power of this worktext is lost. With your participation, it holds unlimited possibilities for bringing change, improving skills, and setting you off on a lifetime of success.

Within the pages of this worktext you will find many activities such as *At This Moment* and *The One Minute Journal*, which will help you explore where you are and where you are going. Each chapter includes a feature called *An Insider's View*, stories from students across the United States discussing issues found within the chapter. Each chapter ends with an *Internet Activity* that will both help you explore issues and actively learn to use one of the most powerful technological tools available today.

You will notice that the pages of *Cornerstone* are filled with cartoons. They are there for your

enjoyment and to add a little comic relief (many of them are a howl!). The cartoons also tell a story. Get to know Cliff, Miho, Vasquez, Kate, and the others. Watch how they cope with their college experiences, how they're changed by them, and how they grow from them.

While this edition of *Cornerstone* is a condensed version of our larger book, we have added a couple of important new topics. There is an entirely new chapter, Chapter Four, *Think before You Leap: Using Critical Thinking Skills in College and Life*. The ability to think critically will help you succeed as a student and, perhaps more importantly, succeed as a member of society.

Chapter Eight, *Avoiding the All-Nighter: Studying for Success*, contains a new section of *Learning Styles*. Knowing that not everyone learns in the same way, and recognizing your own individual learning styles and preferences may help you immeasurably, especially when it comes time to prepare for tests.

Included with your book is a double entry journal, in which you are asked to respond to a variety of questions. When used properly, this journal can be a valuable communication tool between you, your peers, and your instructor. Take your time to reflect honestly and openly on the questions asked. Only through your own soul-searching and self-revelation will the features of this book help you improve your skills as a college student and assist you in becoming a productive citizen.

We wish you luck in building your future on the cornerstones that will carry you for the rest of your life.

Rhonda, Pat, and Robb

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Newman, Newton North High School, Massachusetts; Shawnee Price, Midlands Technical College; and Julie Weber, Ohio University.

Thanks to Christian O'Brien for creating the illustrations for this book. Christian is a graduate of Massachusetts College of Art in Boston. While there, he edited *The Rag*, an on-campus publication, and was a member of the Student Government Association. His work can be found in various small press publications.

Born in 1974, he grew up in Haverhill, Massachusetts, and spent much of his childhood drawing cartoons. Despite support from family and teachers, he often doubted he was capable of succeeding as an artist. At college, he honed his talents and learned to have faith in his ability.

And thanks to Jackie Romeo of Emerson College, who contributed her advice and her humor to the conceptualization of the illustrations.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS



### Rhonda J. Montgomery

Rhonda Montgomery is the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs for the William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and has been teaching in higher education for 10 years. Rhonda has been responsible for developing and incorporating first-year orientation/study skills curricula into existing introductory courses and programs.

Currently, Rhonda is teaching a first-year orientation/study skills course as well as hospitality education. Because she believes in the holistic development of first-year students, she volunteers to teach first-year students each semester and uses a variety of experiences such as field trips, exercises, and case studies to aid in their retention and success.

Rhonda is the co-author of five texts including two student success texts, *Cornerstone* and *365 Things I Learned in College* (Allyn & Bacon, 1996). She has also presented at The National Conference on the Freshman Year Experience and spoken extensively to first-year students and educators about building success into their curriculum.



### Patricia G. Moody

Patricia G. Moody is a Professor and Chairman of the Department in Business and Marketing Education at the University of South Carolina, where she has been a faculty member for over twenty years. An award-winning educator, Pat has been honored as Distinguished Educator of the Year at her college, Collegiate Teacher of the Year by the National Business Education Association, and has been a top-five finalist for the Amoco Teaching Award at the University of South Carolina. In 1994, she was awarded the prestigious John Robert Gregg Award, the highest honor in her field of over 100,000 educators.

Pat frequently speaks to multiple sections of first-year students, incorporating personal development content from her trademark speech, “Fly Like an Eagle,” as well as numerous strategies for building self-esteem and for achieving success in college. She also works with first-year classes on subjects such as goal setting, priority management, and diversity.

A nationally known motivation speaker, Pat has spoken in 42 states, has been invited to speak in several foreign countries, and frequently keynotes national and regional conventions. She has presented “Fly Like an Eagle” to thousands of people from Olympic athletes to corporate executives to high school students. Her topics include Thriving in the Changing Corporate Environment, Perception is Everything: Powerful Communications Strategies, Gold Star Customer Service, and The Great Balancing Act: Managing Time at Home and at Work.

An avid sports fan, she follows Gamecock athletics and chairs the University of South Carolina Athletics Advisory Committee.

#### **Robert M. Sherfield**

Robert Sherfield has been teaching public speaking, theater, and study skills and working with first-year orientation programs for over 15 years. Currently, he is on the full-time faculty at the Community College of Southern Nevada, teaching study skills, orientation courses, and drama.

Robb’s extensive work with student success programs includes experience with the design and implementation of these programs—including one program that was presented at the International Conference on the Freshman Year Experience in Newcastle upon Tyne, England.

Some of Robb’s responsibilities have also included serving as Coordinator of University 101, Director of Student and Cultural Activities, Director of Orientation Programs, and Director of Student Media at the University of South Carolina at Union. He also codesigned a student success course at Florence Darlington Technical College.

In addition to his coauthorship of *Cornerstone: Building on Your Best*, he has also coauthored *Roadways to Success* (Allyn & Bacon, 1997) and the trade book, *365 Things I Learned in College* (Allyn & Bacon, 1996).

Robb’s interest in student success began with his own first year in college. Low SAT scores and a mediocre high school ranking denied him entrance into college. With the help of a success program, Robb was granted entrance into college, and went on to earn a doctorate and become a college faculty member. He has always been interested in the social, academic, and cultural development of students, and sees this book as his way to contribute to the positive development of first-year students across the nation.



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# CORNERSTONE

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Life is its own journey, it presup-  
poses its own change and move-  
ment, and one who tries to arrest  
change does so at his eternal peril.

Van der Post

## Nothing Stays the Same: Pre- paring for and Dealing with Change

Mark was the son of textile workers. Both of his parents had worked in the mills for almost 30 years. They lived in the rural south about 35 miles from the nearest metropolitan area. His high school graduated a small number of students yearly. Mark had decided to attend a community college some 30 miles from home for his first two years and then transfer



to a larger, four-year college. Money, time, grades, goals, and family commitments led to his decision.

Mark's first class that fall semester was English. The professor walked in, handed out the syllabus, called the roll, and began to lecture. Lord Byron was the topic for the day. The professor sat on a stool by the window, leaned his elbow on the ledge, and sipped a cup of coffee as he told the story of how Byron's foot had been damaged at birth. He continued to weave the details of Byron's life poetically, through quotes and parables, until the 50-minute period had quietly slipped away.

After an hour's break, Mark headed across campus for history. The

professor entered with a dust storm behind her. She went over the syllabus, and before the class had a chance to blink, she was involved in the first lecture. "The cradle of civilization," she began, "was Mesopotamia."

The class scurried to find notebooks and pens to begin taking notes.

Already, they were behind, Mark included. Exactly 47 minutes after she had begun to speak, the professor took her first breath.

"You are in history now. You elected to take this class and you will follow my rules," she told the first-year students sitting in front of her. "You are not to be late, you are to come to this class pre-

pared, and you are to read your homework. If you do what I ask you to do, you will learn more about Western civilization than you ever thought possible. If you do not keep up with me,

**He knew that because of one day in college, he would never be the same.**

you will not know if you are in Egypt, Mesopotamia, or pure hell! Class dismissed!"

Without a moment to spare, Mark ran to the other end of campus for his next class. He walked into the room in



a panic, fearing he was late. To his surprise, the instructor was not yet in class. The class waited for more than 10 minutes before the professor entered. "You need to sign this roster and read chapter one for Wednesday," he said. "You can pick up a syllabus on your way out." Mark was shocked. Was the class over? What about the bell? The students in the class looked at each other with dismay and quietly left the room, wondering what Wednesday would hold.

On the 30-mile trip home, Mark's mind was filled with new thoughts . . . Lord Byron, Mesopotamia, professors who talked too fast, professors who did not talk at all, the cost of tuition, the size of the library. He knew that

something was different, something had changed. He couldn't put his finger on it. It would be years later before he would realize that the change was not his classes, not his schedule, not the people, not the professors—but himself; Mark had changed. In one day, he had tasted something intoxicating, something that was addictive. He had tasted a new world.

Mark had to go to work that afternoon, and even his job had changed. He had always known that he did not want to spend the rest of his life in the factory, but this day the feeling was stronger. His job was not enough, his family was not enough, the farm on which he had been raised was not enough anymore. There was a new light for

Mark, and he knew that because of *one* day in college, he would never be the same. It was like tasting Godiva chocolate for the first time—Hershey's kisses were no longer enough. It was like seeing the ocean for the first time and knowing that the millpond would never be the same. He couldn't go back. What he knew before was simply not enough.

My name is Robert *Mark* Sherfield, and 22 years later, as I coauthor your text, I am still addicted to that new world. Spartanburg Methodist College changed my life, and I am still changing—with every day, every new book I read, every new class I teach, every new person I meet, and every new place to which I travel, I am changing.

Sometimes our fate resembles a fruit tree in winter. Who would think that those branches would turn green again and blossom, but we hope, we know it.  
Goethe, German playwright

## Why Address Change?

**T**ake a minute and think about your life so far. You've already faced some major changes, haven't you? For some of you, graduating from high school recently was a big change. For others, returning to school after being out for five or ten years is a monumental change. For still others, the loss of your job or changing job requirements have caused you to return to college, and that is a major change. In the days, weeks, and months to come, you'll be faced with many more changes, changes that you perhaps did not or could not have expected. You will meet people whose religion, race, national origin, age, or sexual orientation differs from your own. You'll be asked to sit in groups with people who do not have the same values, morals, judgments, and actions as you. You'll be told and shown

things by professors and peers that you never imagined possible. Some of these events will be positive, some shocking, some disturbing, some elevating, and some life altering. You are embarking on one of the most exciting rides of your life—so get ready!

In many of the situations that will arise in the coming days, you may not have to be involved or take any action, you may be only an observer. In some situations you will need to take immediate action. In other cases you'll have time to ponder and reflect on the appropriate action. This chapter will help you cope with change and make wise and healthy decisions. After completing this chapter, you will be able to

- Determine whether college is important to you
- Identify reasons for attending college
- Discuss how college changes people
- Analyze recent changes in your personal life
- Prepare for changes in the coming days
- Prepare for life changes
- Discuss the premises of change
- Recognize and deal with the physical and emotional effects of change
- Incorporate into your life the cornerstones for dealing with change



## Why Cornerstone?

### What Can This Book Do for You?

**T**his book is intended to shake you up—to *cause* change! Yes, to cause change. We hope that this book will help you see more clearly the possibilities the future holds; that the activities included here will help you anticipate and cope with the many new situations you will face; that in the days and weeks to come you will use this book as a guide to help you contend with change, discover more about yourself, develop study and prioritizing skills, master the terminology of college life, develop higher order thinking skills, learn more about careers, cope with stress, and develop an appreciation for diversity. We hope that our words together—yours and ours—will

Life is about change, and  
about movement, and  
about becoming some-  
thing other than what you  
are at this very moment.  
Unknown

help you make your goals and dreams come true. This book is primarily about decisions: decisions that you will face in the days and months ahead, decisions that may affect the rest of your life, decisions that *you* will make. This book is about learning how to bring the best you have to each situation. *Cornerstone* is about building on your best!

We chose the title *Cornerstone* because a cornerstone is, according to the *American Heritage Dictionary*, "the indispensable and fundamental basis of something." We consider this course the cornerstone for your success in college. In a building, a cornerstone is laid to establish a firm foundation. Often, a ceremony attends the laying of a cornerstone, and treasured documents and valuables may be placed within the cornerstone. Today is a celebration; a celebration of your future, of your potential, and of the joys and triumphs yet to come. Today, you are laying the cornerstone for the rest of your life. Take your time, use only the best materials available to you, plan your structure carefully, let others help you along the way, and you will have built a lasting monument celebrating your achievements.

As you read about—and possibly struggle with—the concepts and challenges presented here, you will find many opportunities to write and personalize this worktext. Some of the activities may seem personal and may make you uncomfortable, but if you undertake them seriously, you will gain valuable tools that will help you be successful. The chapters contain many common elements: quotations; At This Moment, A Self-Assessment; interactive writing opportunities; activities; journal exercises; student testimonials; stories of students and graduates; and cornerstones for success.

There are 11 exercises called At This Moment, A Self-Assessment. These exercises are intended to assess where you stand "at this moment" in relation to materials covered in a chapter. Take a moment to determine where you are at this moment in dealing with change.

## AT THIS MOMENT...

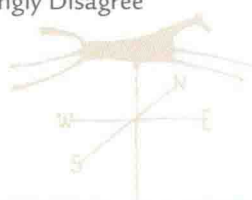
5 = Strongly Agree

4 = Agree

3 = Don't Know

2 = Disagree

1 = Strongly Disagree



1. I handle change easily.  
1 2 3 4 5

2. I deal with stress easily.  
1 2 3 4 5

3. I can make new friends quickly.  
1 2 3 4 5

4. I had no trouble starting college (leaving my friends, spouse, children).  
1 2 3 4 5

5. I can recognize the physical and emotional symptoms caused by change.  
1 2 3 4 5

6. Change is good.  
1 2 3 4 5

7. I adapt to new situations easily.  
1 2 3 4 5

8. I know how to promote change in my life.  
1 2 3 4 5

9. Change seems to be difficult for my friends.  
1 2 3 4 5

10. I do not fear change.  
1 2 3 4 5

**A SELF-ASSESSMENT** Total your points from these ten questions. Refer to the following rating scale to determine where you stand in relation to dealing with change.

0-10 *You have a great deal of difficulty and anxiety when dealing with change.*

11-20 *You have a greater than normal amount of anxiety when dealing with change.*

21-30 *You have a considerable amount of anxiety when dealing with change.*

31-40 *You have some anxiety when dealing with change.*

41-50 *You deal with change very easily and with little anxiety.*

Now, refer to your journal and respond in writing to your findings. Consider the following questions when writing in your journal.

1. Why is change hard (or easy) for me?
2. What makes me afraid (or unafraid) of change?
3. I suffer (or do not suffer) emotionally and physically from change.



## Why College?

**W**ell, here you are, in college. Time to party? Time to get away from the children? Time to find a significant other? Time to study? Time to ponder the meaning of life? All these may be reasons to attend college. There are more than three and a half million first-year students in the nation's colleges right now; each one may have a different reason for being there. Some students are pursuing a high-paying job, developing a specific skill, retraining for the job market, following an old dream. Others are recently divorced and trying to acquire skills that were not taught 15 years ago. Some are in college because of pressure from their parents. And yes, there are those who say that they are in college to party and have a good time. Perhaps you've met a few of them already. And let us not forget the tens of thousands who say they are enrolled to experience developmental, interactive pedagogy and scientific relativity . . . NOT!

The real object of education is to give one resources that will endure as long as life endures; habits that time will not destroy; occupations that will render sickness tolerable; solitude pleasant; age venerable; life more dignified and useful; and death less terrible.

S. Smith, author