Foundations for Learning

CLAIMING YOUR EDUCATION

Third Edition

Laurie L. Hazard
BRYANT UNIVERSITY

Jean-Paul Nadeau
BRISTOL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

PEARSON

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Dedication

To our children, Grace, John, Andrew, and Alison, whose giggles and smiles at the end of the day help sustain this project.
LAURIE L. HAZARD holds an Ed.M. in Counseling and an Ed.D. in Curriculum and Teaching from Boston University. She is the Director of the Academic Center for Excellence at Bryant University, the Curriculum Coordinator for their First-Year Experience (FYE) course, and teaches in the Applied Psychology Department. Laurie, an award winning educator, was selected by the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition as a top ten Outstanding First-Year Student Advocate. She also received the Learning Assistance Association of New England's Outstanding Research and Publication Award.

Laurie has been designing curricula for FYE and study skills courses for more than twenty years reflecting her area of expertise: the personality traits and habits of students that influence academic achievement. She has done extensive work assessing the effectiveness of learning assistance programs and FYE courses. She has been a Guest Editorial Board member for the Learning Assistance Review. Publications by Laurie and her co-author include: Exploring the Evidence, Volume III: Reporting Outcomes of First-Year Seminars, a monograph published by the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition and “What Does It Mean to be ‘College-Ready’?”, an article which appears in Connection: The Journal of the New England Board of Higher Education.

Laurie's expertise has received national media attention. Her interviews include: “Prepare college-bound kids for hard work ahead,” which appeared in the Chicago Tribune in 2007 and “Study Tips for College Students” in Seventeen Magazine in 2008. Most recently, in March 2010, Laurie was interviewed by Associated Press columnist Beth Harpaz for her article “Colleges Don’t Like Senior Slump in High School.”

JEAN-PAUL (JP) NADEAU earned his Ph.D. in Rhetoric and Composition from the University of Rhode Island and has been teaching first-year composition, basic writing, and literature courses since 1992. Currently he is an Associate Professor of English at Bristol Community College, located in Southeastern Massachusetts, where he is also Chair of the English Department’s Portfolio Assessment Program. He recently co-authored a longitudinal study of first-year writers, Community College Writers: Exceeding Expectations (Southern Illinois University Press, 2010). JP has given dozens of presentations at local and national conferences during the last fifteen years, including the Conference on College Composition and Communication, the Learning Assistance Association of New England Conference, and the Northeast Writing Centers Association Conference. He was recipient of the 2006 Learning Assistance Association of New England Outstanding Research and Publication Award along with his co-author. In that same year he was awarded a research grant from the Calderwood Writing Initiative at the Boston Athenaeum.
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Foreword

As a first-year student, I found college to be an environment that was so overwhelming, it was almost impossible to stay focused on the reason why I was there in the first place: to earn a degree. How was I expected to handle the substantial workload assigned outside the classroom when I was given the freedom to do whatever I wanted whenever I wanted? As a traditional 18-year-old student, my parents were no longer around to look over my shoulder to make sure I was doing my homework; it was solely up to me to actively take part in my education.

The pursuit of a college education was a conscious choice I made to improve myself in areas that stretched far beyond the classroom. By the end of the first week of classes, it became quite clear that I could not be successful by just being there. I had to claim my education as my own. A great deal of responsibility comes with the privilege of having the opportunity to earn a college degree. Maintaining a healthy social environment, practicing time management and effective study skills, and preparing for the tasks assigned were must do’s for me and anyone else who expected to claim their education and achieve their goals. To build a solid college experience and eventual professional career, I needed a base to build on.

The one thing that helped prepare me was a class all first-year students were enrolled in that year called “Foundations for Learning.” The class was geared specifically toward the issues that all students face and designed in a way that readied me for challenges I would encounter throughout my first year. For example, just as I was trying to figure out what my school was all about, Chapter One described the inner workings of a collegiate institution and what was expected of me from my professors.

I thought I knew it all in high school, but college was very different with much higher expectations. The text Foundations for Learning not only explained to me what it meant to be a college student, but it also taught me the necessary skills I needed to be a successful individual. I learned in Chapter Two that surrounding myself with the right friends who shared the same interests and supported me as an individual was one of the most important decisions I would ever make. With guidance in creating the right social environment, I was now ready to focus on achieving my goals.

The remaining chapters in the textbook coached me through effective methods of understanding how I personally learn best, specific study tactics for different types of tests, writing papers, note taking, and, most importantly, time management. By learning how to manage my time effectively, through a structured schedule, I found I had ample time to get all my work done, spend time with my friends, and participate in on-campus activities. This has made my college experience both enjoyable and increasingly productive. As a junior, I still hit bumps in the road, whether it is preparing for a complex presentation in my investments class or finding
an effective way to read through a difficult novel in philosophy. At first I thought the book used in *Foundations for Learning* was just a textbook, but I realize now that I can use it throughout college as a reference for working through problems I will face in the future.

As I read this book, I realized it actually works. The principles and skills I learned and implemented as a result have guided me toward earning an exceptional grade-point average thus far. By accepting the fact that I did not know everything about school, I was able to acquire effective tools to improve my life as a whole. More than a textbook, *Foundations for Learning* provides guidance on what is necessary to be successful beyond college. *Foundations for Learning* gave me the tools to take my college experience to the highest level. I believe the good habits I have developed will undoubtedly extend into my career in the future. It is now up to you to claim your education.

—Daniel J. Fiandaca
Student Reviewer
WHAT’S NEW IN THIS EDITION

The third edition of Foundations for Learning: Claiming Your Education aims to help a broader range of students by sharing a more diverse range of student experiences and asking a broader range of questions about students’ learning processes and attitudes.

- “Adjust Your Mindset” and “Adjust Your Strategies” sections. These sections begin each chapter by asking questions to help students consider their current and emerging attitudes and behaviors relative to forthcoming chapter content. As opposed to earlier editions (which included only a few of these questions under the title “Make it Personal”), the separation serves to emphasize the distinction between attitudes and behaviors, a key theme in the text.
- “First year diaries: Adjustment reflections” sections. Each chapter now ends with between one and three journal entry chunks from actual students enrolled in a first-year experience course. Entries are explicitly linked to key chapter concepts.
- Broadened audience. While previous editions were aimed squarely at students attending residential, four-year institutions, this new edition broadens the audience base to include students attending two-year colleges, commuters, and adult learners. Changes include, but are not limited to, examples and student narratives originating from these subject-positions.
- Additional visual aids. New visual aids will help students understand difficult concepts. These include a sample syllabus, a breakdown of variations of the 8-8-8 formula, and a graphic representation of Freud’s theory of personality, among others.
- Attention to emerging technologies. Educators are increasingly aware of the influences technology such as Blackboard (and other course delivery software), Facebook, Twitter, and texting is having on student learning. This edition speaks to these influences, helping to prepare students to manage their cyber-presence in college.
- New emphases in key sections. The “Planning, Prioritizing, and Procrastination” and “Developing Malleable Mindsets and Metacognitive Skills” chapters have undergone extensive revision. The former now more firmly emphasizes the need for behavior management, offering advice on how to manage behavior to achieve goals in a new section titled, “Overcoming Procrastination.” The latter has a reworked “Theories of Intelligence” section that includes a new category: emotional intelligence. Brain function is also discussed here for the first time.
This book is written with the central idea that all students have the ability to succeed in higher education. We presume from the outset that every individual can cultivate the habits of mind necessary for academic achievement regardless of their intelligence quotients, past educational records, high school grades, and college boards. For many years, such indicators have been used to predict college success and achievement. We contend that, once you are admitted to an institution of higher education, they don't really matter all that much. You may be thinking, “Well then, what does matter?” This textbook argues that what matters most are your attitudes and the behaviors you enact as a result of those attitudes.

At its core, this text is based on the psychology of adjustment. Psychology is the study of behaviors and mental processes. Behaviors are what you do, what's observable by others. Mental processes are thoughts, attitudes and feelings. If you think of yourself as lazy, you may have a negative attitude and not feel like doing much of anything let alone studying; however, if you conceive of yourself as a hardworking student, you will more likely enact behaviors that are congruent with the definition of hardworking such as reading, going to the library, and utilizing services on your campus. Your mindset, then, influences how you behave. Reflecting on your mindset in an honest way will enable you to make necessary adjustments for your new role as a college student.

We therefore encourage you to take an in-depth look at your attitudes toward education and learning and how they might affect your college experience. Our best advice is to keep an open mind, accepting you will likely experience many changes over the course of this academic year. Reading this book with the mindset, “I already know what I’m doing, this is just a waste of time,” a somewhat negative attitude, will result in little, if any, introspection and change. But if you enthusiastically accept the challenge to evaluate your current attitudes and study habits, for instance, you will find more efficient and effective methods of accomplishing your academic goals.

You will notice that this textbook is written in a style common to academic texts. Research is referenced to support the concepts presented in each chapter. This approach is purposeful, modeling one type of writing you will be asked to do in college; it also allows you to make a more informed decision regarding whether to embrace or reject individual ideas and strategies presented. Indeed, without this research, we would be imploring you to just do it, which doesn't reconcile well with the self-reflective, evaluative stance we are suggesting students should take toward their education. Instead of imploring you to just do it, rather, we implore you to be ready for new ideas and willing to try new strategies. Allow time for the ideas to resonate and the strategies to become part of your repertoire of skills before you make the informed decision to accept or reject what you have learned.

We deliberately selected the topics in the text based on years of professional academic support experience and student feedback. Recognizing that the student standpoint is critical, you will notice many student voices
and narratives presented in the text. These are the words and stories of real students from several different two- and four-year institutions of higher education. Although their situations may differ from those you may have faced in the past or will face in the future, observing their responses to various situations can help you negotiate events and circumstances in your own college career. You have the opportunity to benefit from understanding the ways in which other students who have come before you have achieved their successes and persevered through failures.

Observing many such students has given us incredible insight to what exactly it is that students need to know to be successful in higher education particularly during the first year. To that end, the chapter topics were thoughtfully chosen as a result of years of working with students and pinpointing the salient features of what attitudes and habits are necessary to make the grade during the first year.

Acknowledging that the student standpoint is critical, so too is it essential for you to clearly understand the new context in which you will be learning. Chapter One explains this context, offering you entree into the social institution of higher education, a scholarly community. Understanding this context is crucial because it will provide you with insight into your professors’ vantage point, an appreciation for your role and responsibility within the scholarly community, and a keen awareness of the vital conventions of this community.

Once you become familiar with the inner workings of your institution of higher education and those working, teaching, and learning there, you will need to consider your position as an individual within it. Who are you as a person, and how will that affect the way you function at college? Getting a solid handle on your thoughts and feelings surrounding this question is what Chapter Two is all about: reflecting on your developing academic self-concept. Chapter One, then, is about the institution of higher education, and Chapter Two is all about you as the individual and how you fit into it. As you begin to solidify this understanding of yourself and how you will approach your new environment, Chapter Three asks you to turn outward toward others, considering their diversity and reflecting on what you can learn by being open to those who are different from you. Once you understand the institution, your position within it, and gain a reconceived appreciation for those around you, you have the initial cornerstone of your “foundation for learning.”

In the remaining chapters, the text exposes you to a variety of skills and strategies you will most definitely want to master to do well in your college-level coursework. A wide variety of topics, such as time management, how to combat procrastination, identify your learning style, write a research paper, and prepare for exams, are discussed. These topics beg the question of whether you have already mastered these skills and strategies. Certainly, some of you will say you have done so. A wise professor adopted a clever mantra when using this text for his course. He granted to his students that some of them may already know “how to” manage their time, but the larger question was whether they were actually doing it, and could
they do it in the same way in this new context. His mantra was, “You may know how to do it, but are you actually doing it?” He would raise this simple question each time his class met.

Indeed, at the heart of Foundations for Learning is this mantra. The question of whether you are actually applying the skills and strategies that have been recently taught to you (or the ones you “already know”) is embedded in each chapter. Each chapter implores you to revisit your attitudes and the behaviors you choose to enact as a by-product of those attitudes. Each chapter reminds you to engage in a serious self-reflection. Which attitudes do you possess that will either propel you toward or inhibit you from getting the most out of your college experience?

What is at stake here is learning. Learning is a relatively permanent change in behavior due to experience. This definition of learning presumes from the outset that during your first-year, you will undergo permanent changes in behavior, but you will find that this is entirely up to you. Social-cognitive theorists identify three ways in which learning takes place: through direct experience, self-produced experience, and vicarious experience. Direct experience means that you have to earn a “C” on a paper before you decide to change the behavior of composing papers the night before they are due. Self-produced experience means that you inherently recognize the task of writing a college level paper will require different strategies, and perhaps you use a trial and error approach to adjust to this awareness, thus producing your own consequences. Finally, vicarious experience is the idea that learning takes place through observation, modeling, and taking the advice of those who have experienced college success before you.

It may come as no surprise that most people learn by direct experience. Our hope is that you may consider shifting your mindset to learning primarily through vicarious experience. That is, consider the research in this book that discusses the study habits that the most successful college students utilize, for example. Reflect on the experiences of those students who came before you. Learn what strategies work best and what pitfalls to avoid by vicariously experiencing the triumphs and challenges others have encountered during their first-year. Finally, once this advice is heeded, self-produce your own consequences.
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Supplemental Resources

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**Practice activities** – Practice skills for each topic - beginning, intermediate, and advanced - leveled by Bloom’s taxonomy.

"I liked that it gives students the opportunity to discover the content and I think that’s the key, not only in face-to-face teaching, but also online as well.”

Meg Hunter, Gateway Technical College (Wisconsin)
What could you gain by building critical thinking and problem-solving skills in this class?

Apply (final project)

- Complete a final project using these skills to create ‘personally relevant’ resources.

As an instructor, how much easier would it be to assign and use MyStudentSuccessLab if you had an Implementation guide?

Instructor Guide – Describes each activity, the skills addressed, an estimate of student time on task, and a grading rubric for the final Apply activity.

**MyStudentSuccessLab Feature set:**

Topic Overview: Module objectives.

Video Presentation - Connect: Real student video interviews on key issues.

Practice: Three skill-building exercises per topic provide interactive experience and practice.

Apply - Personalize: Apply what is learned by creating a personally relevant project and journal.


Additional Assignments: Extra suggested activities to use with each topic.

Text-Specific Study Plan (available with select books): Chapter Objectives, Practice Tests, Enrichment activities, and Flashcards.

**MyStudentSuccessLab Topic List**

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**MyStudentSuccessLab Support:**

- Demos, Registration, Log-in - www.mystudentsuccesslab.com under “Tours and Training” and “Support.”
- Email support - Send an inquiry to MyStudentSuccessLab@pearson.com
- Online Training - Join one of our weekly WebEx training sessions.
- Peer Training - Faculty Advocate connection for qualified adoptions.
- Technical support - 24 hours a day, seven days a week, at http://247pearsoned.custhelp.com
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We provide variety of Training options to meet your needs. Events and Workshops around the country as well as Online Webinars. MyStudentSuccessLab Technology training is available too.

A wealth of Resources are available to address a range of interests, including assessments, online catalog, customized solutions, Instructor Resources, and Student Resources. Technology is addressed, whether you're teaching online, hybrid, or just need an engagement tool.

For Support, always contact your local sales professional, however, the SSCD Team is here to help anytime including Customer Service, Technical Support, Editorial, Events, Marketing, Specialists, and Faculty Advocates.

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