

s e c o n d e d i t i o n

# *Choices* for College Success

Steve Piscitelli

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*To the memory of Marie Piscitelli  
and Dominic Piscitelli*

Thank you for giving me choices.



# about the *Author*



**Steve Piscitelli** has three decades of teaching and professional development experience. He has taught students of varying abilities and grade levels, from middle school through the university level. He has been recognized for his effective teaching style with awards at the school, county, and international level. Steve is also a seasoned national workshop developer and presenter. He brings energy, humor, interaction, live original music, and practicality to his classes and workshops. He has presented in every region of the nation.

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# Preface

This is a book about personal choices—responsible choices that will help students get what they want from school and life. *Choices for College Success* demonstrates how organized action enhances academic success and helps create a healthy and balanced life.

Although the first edition of this book (titled *Rhythms of College Success*) benefited thousands of students across the country, I have come to understand the power of the review process. With the input of peer reviewers, current users, and students, I realize that a revised edition will be more powerful and helpful to students.

This edition has two integrated themes connecting each chapter:

- Priority management
- Personal balance and well-being

The book retains its student-friendly tone and reliance on reflective activities (more than eighty of them) to help students understand what they can do well—and where they need to improve.

Below you will find the features, changes, and additions to *Choices for College Success*.

## Features for This Edition

- The book's title reflects the power of personal choice and responsibility. Each chapter and each activity will demonstrate how responsible decision making and follow-through put potential and ambition into action. Potential is the *ability*; ambition is the *desire*; and initiative is the *doing*.
- Each chapter starts with consistent pedagogical organizers—Chapter Objectives, Introduction, and Organizing Your Thoughts—and ends with a Summary.
- The chapter objectives that begin each chapter include one objective for each chapter section. The objectives repeat at the beginning of the appropriate section to remind students of the relationship of objective to material (without having to flip back to the beginning of the chapter). These objectives encourage students to use the chapter skills in a practical and observable manner. For instance:
  - The chapter on motivation and goal setting (Chapter 3) includes the following measurable objective: *Describe two action steps you can take immediately to move closer to one of your goals.*
  - The chapter on listening and note-taking skills (Chapter 5) includes the following measurable objective: *Identify three expectations each of your instructors has for you this term—and explain what you are doing to fulfill those expectations.*

- The chapter on majors and careers (Chapter 13) includes the following measurable objective: *Find and use at least three campus, community, and Internet sources that will help you make an informed decision about declaring your college major.*

Each objective places responsibility on the student for making choices.

- A chapter Pre-Assessment appears in every chapter. These awareness-building activities allow students to reflect on their experiences and current level of expertise with the chapter topic—and identify areas in which they need to improve. The chapter then examines the concepts introduced in the Pre-Assessment.

- A chapter-ending Post-Assessment, titled “Learn it, question it, use it,” asks students *what* they have learned and *how* they will use what they have learned to move them closer to academic success and personal balance. This activity will help students to operationalize the material they have just read.

- In addition to a Pre-Assessment and Post-Assessment, each chapter has two types of Choices activities.

- *Priorities.* These reflective activities allow students to hone their priority management skills as they relate to chapter topics.

- *Personal Well-Being.* These reflective activities help students relate chapter concepts to the various dimensions of their lives (e.g., social, emotional, physical, and intellectual).

- The book is separated into three parts that reflect three distinct categories of choices students must make:

- Choices for Priority Management
- Choices for Academic Success
- Choices for a Balanced Life

- Each part of the book ends with a quick R & R: Review and Renew activity. Students respond to three challenges before they move on to the next part of the book:

- Identify and explain how at least one activity from each of the preceding chapters was meaningful to them.
- Identify changes they need to make in order to have the life they want.
- Identify the actions they took and still need to take to effect the changes they believe they need to make.

- Five Student Spotlights provide student perspectives on challenges and choices first-year students must address. These spotlights are strategically placed to open the book and open each of the three parts of the book.

- A final Student Spotlight will be written by the student reader of the book as a culminating activity.

## **New to the Second Edition**

In addition to the features mentioned, the following are new to this edition.

- Two reasons rank high as to why students do not persist in their studies: time problems and money problems. That is one reason that the chapter on organiza-

tion is now the second chapter of the book. This chapter still contains traditional priority management skills, tips to organize personal space, and strategies to decrease stress. New to this edition is an introduction to managing finances early in this chapter. Students need to budget their money immediately—not at the end of the book or the end of the semester. Basic budgeting is introduced; more in-depth financial literacy is covered in Chapter 12.

- The topic of financial literacy has its own complete chapter (Chapter 12). Students will examine basic information and advice concerning budgeting, spending, saving, and loans. This chapter has been extended considerably from the previous edition.
- A revised chapter on health (Chapter 11) examines (in greater detail) the issues of diet, exercise, and physical conditioning.
- The chapter on information literacy (Chapter 9) has been revised to include a complete section on the responsibilities of the information age. This section examines academic integrity, social networking, and texting issues.
- The chapter on civility and group dynamics (Chapter 10) weaves diversity, communication, and conflict resolution into the discussion.
- Testing strategies have been divided into two chapters: one on test preparation (Chapter 7) and one on test performance (Chapter 8). These are complementary skills but different enough to warrant their own chapters.
- The various activities that students complete over the course of the book provide them with a portfolio of strategies developed and tested while internalizing the concepts from each chapter. In this way, they will be able to answer the question “What am I doing to get what I want?”

## Overview of the Chapters: What Is New and Revised?

### Part One: Choices for Priority Management

#### Chapter 1: Transitions, Balance, and Organization (revised)

- This chapter provides students with an overview of the book’s integrated themes of priority management and personal balance and well-being. Emphasizing that students are responsible for the choices they make, the chapter shows students how their informed choices will help them get what they want from school and life.

#### Chapter 2: Organizing Time, Space, and Money (revised)

- Students drop out of college for various reasons but the two main reasons reflect problems with time and money. Students who learn how to organize and manage their resources help themselves persist in their studies. This chapter introduces strategies to prioritize time, organize space, manage finances, and minimize stress.

#### Chapter 3: Motivation and Goal Setting (revised)

- This chapter examines what motivates students to achieve their goals. Values drive choices and affect goals. Students are encouraged to strike from their vocabulary two words, *try* and *but*, which can stymie motivation and block goals.

#### **Chapter 4: Critical Thinking and Learning Preferences (revised)**

- New to this edition is the complete VARK (7.0) learning preference inventory. Students are also encouraged to apply multiple intelligences to specific academic success issues.

### **Part Two: Choices for Academic Success**

#### **Chapter 5: Class-Time Listening and Note-Taking Skills (revised)**

- Application activities on instructor styles and expectations help students prepare for classroom success. New to this edition is a section on comparing and contrasting note-taking styles, and another section on note-taking abbreviations has been added.

#### **Chapter 6: Out-of-Class Strategies for Notes Review and Textbook Reading (revised)**

- The importance of prioritization is reiterated (from Chapter 2) early in this chapter. A practical application allows students to practice a notes review strategy. How to use context clues and textbook graphics also now appears in this chapter.

#### **Chapter 7: Test-Preparation and Memory Skills (revised)**

- The topic of testing has been divided into preparation (this chapter) and performance (Chapter 8). The preparation chapter appears separately to emphasize that students must prepare long before they perform. The connection between test preparation and other study skills has been retained and emphasized. An effective memory helps students become more aware of their course material and organize that material more effectively. It will help them store information in a logical way so that they can recall it and use it in the future on exams—and beyond in life.

#### **Chapter 8: Test Performance (new)**

- Although many of these concepts were covered in the first edition, this entire chapter focuses on test performance. Trigger words for essay writing are still reviewed. New to this edition are specific test item examples and strategies for multiple-choice, matching, fill-in-the-blank, true/false, short-answer, and essay tests. Academic integrity has been reinforced in this chapter.

#### **Chapter 9: Information Literacy (revised)**

- A section on the responsibilities of the information age has been added. Topics include academic integrity, e-mail and texting responsibilities, social networking addiction, and cyber privacy issues.

### **Part Three: Choices for a Balanced Life**

#### **Chapter 10: The Many Faces of Civility (revised)**

- Diversity has been used to anchor this chapter on communicating, collaborating, and conflict resolution.

#### **Chapter 11: Treating Yourself with Respect (new)**

- A smaller piece of this chapter appeared in the previous edition. The new chapter has significantly expanded information on physical conditioning. Exercise and diet have a major emphasis. Social and emotional connections to physical conditioning are covered as well.

**Chapter 12: Financial Literacy (new)**

- A small piece of this chapter appeared in the previous edition. This new chapter explores budgets, checking accounts, savings accounts, and loans. An underlying theme helps students see how responsible choices now can create financial habits that will build wealth—not debt—for the future.

**Chapter 13: Exploration of Majors and Careers (revised)**

- This chapter begins with ten misconceptions about college majors. The remainder of the chapter debunks the myths. One new activity helps students prepare to interview a professional in their career field of interest. Another new activity helps students develop lists of action words they can use in résumés and cover letters.

**Afterword (new)**

- This chapter is short yet powerful. It helps students review and evaluate the challenges they have faced and the choices they have made over the last few months. They also consider the changes that they need to make in the future—and the choices that will help them through the change process.
- The students will write their own student spotlight as a culminating activity.
- A new end-of-chapter list, A 14-Step Guide to a Life of Balanced Priorities, leaves students with summary “take-away points” from each chapter and the Afterword.

One last note about this second edition: Since the time that I wrote the first edition, *Rhythms of College Success: A Journey of Discovery, Change, and Mastery*, I have had the good fortune to write and publish *Study Skills: Do I Really Need This Stuff?*, Second Edition.\* Some material from that book has been used in the chapters that follow.

**Instructor Resources**

Resources to simplify your life and support your students.

**Book-Specific Online Resources**

- **Instructor’s Manual with Test Bank** (ISBN: 0-13-700752-3) This manual provides professors a rich selection of teaching strategies to assist in implementing the concepts and activities in the text. The IM offers suggestions for student journal writing, creating thought-provoking situations, and group activities. The test bank, organized by chapter, includes multiple-choice, true/false, and short-answer questions. Instructors can download this supplement from the Instructor’s Resource Center at [www.pearsonhighered.com/irc](http://www.pearsonhighered.com/irc).

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\*Steve Piscitelli, *Study Skills: Do I Really Need This Stuff?*, 2nd ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2009).

- **PowerPoint Presentation with Clicker Questions** (ISBN: 0-13-700754-X) *Choices for College Success* offers a comprehensive set of PowerPoint slides that instructors can use for class presentations and students can use for lecture preview or review. These slides include graphs and tables in the textbook and highlight the important points of each chapter to help students understand the concepts. Instructors may download the PowerPoint presentation from the Instructor's Resource Center at [www.pearsonhighered.com/irc](http://www.pearsonhighered.com/irc).

- **MyTest** This Pearson computerized testing system allows professors to easily adapt, rearrange, and add to the test questions offered in the book-specific test bank. This technologically reliable, secure testing system also provides professors the ability to organize test questions by learning objective and offer feedback. It has a wide range of test types to suit any teaching and testing style. Upon completion, professors can print out the test for their students ([www.pearsonmytest.com](http://www.pearsonmytest.com)).

- **MyStudentSuccessLab** Are you teaching online, in a hybrid setting, or looking to infuse exciting technology into your classroom for the first time? Then be sure to refer to the MyStudentSuccessLab section on pages xxxiv–xxxv of this Preface to learn more. This online solution is designed to help students acquire the skills they need to succeed ([www.mystudentsuccesslab.com](http://www.mystudentsuccesslab.com)).

## Other Resources

### Instructor Resource Center

Easy access to online, book-specific teaching support is now just a click away!

Register. Redeem. Login. Three easy steps that open the door to a variety of print and media resources in downloadable, digital format, available to instructors exclusively through the Pearson IRC: [www.pearsonhighered.com/irc](http://www.pearsonhighered.com/irc).

Choose from a wide range of video resources for the classroom!

- **Pearson Reference Library: Life Skills Pack** (ISBN: 0-13-127079-6). Contains all four videos, or they may be requested individually as follows:

- Learning Styles and Self-Awareness, ISBN: 0-13-028502-1
- Critical and Creative Thinking, ISBN: 0-13-028504-8
- Relating to Others, ISBN: 0-13-028511-0
- Personal Wellness, ISBN: 0-13-028514-5

- **Pearson Reference Library: Study Skills Pack** (ISBN: 0-13-127080-X). Contains all six videos, or they may be requested individually as follows:

- Reading Effectively, ISBN: 0-13-028505-6
- Listening and Memory, ISBN: 0-13-028506-4
- Note Taking and Research, ISBN: 0-13-028508-0
- Writing Effectively, ISBN: 0-13-028509-9
- Effective Test Taking, ISBN: 0-13-028500-5
- Goal Setting and Time Management, ISBN: 0-13-028503-X

- **Pearson Reference Library: Career Skills Pack** (ISBN: 0-13-118529-2). Contains all three videos, or they may be requested individually as follows:

- Skills for the 21st Century—Technology, ISBN: 0-13-028512-9
- Skills for the 21st Century—Math and Science, ISBN: 0-13-028513-7
- Managing Money and Career, ISBN: 0-13-028516-1
- **Complete Reference Library—Life/Study Skills/Career Video Pack on DVD** (ISBN: 0-13-501095-0).
  - Our Reference Library of thirteen popular video resources has now been digitized onto one DVD so students and instructors alike can benefit from the array of video clips. Featuring Life Skills, Study Skills, and Career Skills, they help to reinforce the course content in a more interactive way.
- **Faculty Video Resources**
  - Teacher Training Video 1: Critical Thinking, ISBN: 0-13-099432-4
  - Teacher Training Video 2: Stress Management & Communication, ISBN: 0-13-099578-9
  - Teacher Training Video 3: Classroom Tips, ISBN: 0-13-917205-X
  - Student Advice Video, ISBN: 0-13-233206-X
  - Study Skills Video, ISBN: 0-13-096095-0
  - Faculty Development Workshop (DVD), ISBN: 0-13-227192-3
- **Current Issues Videos**
  - ABC News Video Series: Student Success, Second Edition, ISBN: 0-13-031901-5
  - ABC News Video Series: Student Success, Third Edition, ISBN: 0-13-152865-3
- **MyStudentSuccessLab Videos on DVD** (ISBN: 0-13-514249-0).
  - Our six most popular video resources have been digitized onto one DVD so students and instructors alike can benefit from the array of video clips. Featuring Technology, Math and Science, Managing Money and Career, Learning Styles and Self-Awareness, Study Skills, and Peer Advice, they help to reinforce the course content in a more interactive way. They are also accessible through our MSSL and course management offerings and available on VHS.

Through partnership opportunities, we offer a variety of assessment options!

- **LASSI:** The LASSI is a 10-scale, 80-item assessment of students' awareness about and use of learning and study strategies. Addressing skill, will, and self-regulation, the focus is on both covert and overt thoughts, behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs that relate to successful learning and that can be altered through educational interventions. Available in two formats: Paper ISBN: 0-13-172315-4 or Online ISBN: 0-13-172316-2 (access card).
- **Noel Levitz/RMS:** This retention tool measures Academic Motivation, General Coping Ability, Receptivity to Support Services, and Social Motivation. It helps identify at-risk students, the areas with which they struggle, and their receptiveness to support. Available in paper or online formats, as well as short and long versions. Paper Long Form A ISBN: 0-13-512066-7; Paper Short Form B ISBN: 0-13-512065-9; Online Forms A, B, & C ISBN: 0-13-098158-3.
- **Robbins Self-Assessment Library:** This compilation teaches students to create a portfolio of skills. SAL is a self-contained, interactive library of forty-nine behavioral questionnaires that help students discover new ideas about themselves,

their attitudes, and their personal strengths and weaknesses. Available in paper, CD-ROM, and online (access card) formats.

- **Readiness for Education at a Distance Indicator (READI):** READI is a web-based tool that assesses the overall likelihood for online learning success. READI generates an immediate score and a diagnostic interpretation of results, including recommendations for successful participation in online courses and potential remediation sources. Please visit [www.readi.info](http://www.readi.info) for additional information. ISBN: 0-13-188967-2.

- **Pathway to Student Success CD-ROM:** The CD is divided into several categories, each of which focuses on a specific topic that relates to students and provides them with the context, tools, and strategies to enhance their educational experience. ISBN: 0-13-239314-X.

Teaching tolerance and discussing diversity with your students can be challenging!

- **Responding to Hate at School:** Published by the Southern Poverty Law Center, the Teaching Tolerance handbook is a step-by-step, easy-to-use guide designed to help administrators, counselors, and teachers react promptly and efficiently whenever hate, bias, and prejudice strike.

For a truly tailored solution that fosters campus connections and increases retention, talk with us about custom publishing.

- **Pearson Custom Publishing:** We are the largest custom provider for print and media shaped to your course's needs. Please visit us at [www.pearsoncustom.com](http://www.pearsoncustom.com) to learn more.

## Student Resources: Tools to Help Make the Grade Now, and Excel in School Later

Today's students are more inclined than ever to use technology to enhance their learning.

- **MyStudentSuccessLab:** Refer to the MyStudentSuccessLab section on pages xxxiv–xxxv to learn more about our revolutionary resource ([www.mystudentsuccesslab.com](http://www.mystudentsuccesslab.com)). This online solution is designed to help students acquire the skills they need to succeed.

Time management is the #1 challenge students face. We can help.

- **Prentice Hall Planner:** A basic planner that includes a monthly and daily calendar plus other materials to facilitate organization. 8.5× 11 trim size.

- **Premier Annual Planner:** This specially designed, annual 4-color collegiate planner includes an academic planning/resources section, a monthly planning section (2 pages/month), and a weekly planning section (48 weeks; July start

date), which facilitate short-term as well as long-term planning. Spiral bound, 6× 9 trim size. Customization is available.

Journaling activities promote self-discovery and self-awareness.

- **Student Reflection Journal:** Through this vehicle, students are encouraged to track their progress and share their insights, thoughts, and concerns. 8.5× 11 trim size. 90 pages.

The Student Orientation Series includes short booklets on specialized topics that facilitate greater student understanding.

- **S.O.S. Guides** help students understand what these opportunities are, how to take advantage of them, and how to learn from their peers while doing so. They include:

- Connolly: Learning Communities, ISBN: 0-13-232243-9
- Hoffman: Stop Procrastination Now! 10 Simple and SUCCESSFUL Steps for Student Success, ISBN: 0-13-513056-5
- Watts: Service Learning, ISBN: 0-13-232201-3
- Jabr: English Language Learners, ISBN: 0-13-232242-0



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I continue to be a very lucky man!

Steve Piscitelli  
Atlantic Beach, Florida

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**Succeed in college and beyond!**  
**Connect, practice, and personalize with MyStudentSuccessLab.**

[www.mystudentsuccesslab.com](http://www.mystudentsuccesslab.com)

**MyStudentSuccessLab** is an online solution designed to help instructors engage their students in the course content, provide practice on skill development, and assess mastery. Additional resources, including sample syllabi, guide, assignments, and rubrics are included.

**MyStudentSuccessLab saves class prep time and supports implementation:**  
**Instructor Tools/Support –**

- **Sample syllabus** – provided to ensure easy implementation.
- **Instructor's guide** - includes information that describes each activity, the skills each addresses, an estimated student time on task for each exercise, and a grading rubric for the final Apply activity.
- **Additional Assignments** - Extra suggested activities to use with each topic:
  1. General activity related to an important objective for each topic.
  2. Internet use Assignment (e.g. Google "You Tube" video on topic) to find a video on key strategies and write a critique and present it to the class.
  3. Student Resource tool usage – ie. Read and take online notes on the main points of the Understanding Plagiarism guide.

Grade To Date:	View Gradebook By:	Grade Earned to Date	Possible for Course
Module 1: Time Management - Journal		*	10 pts.
Module 1: Time Management - Practice 3: Dropbox		*	*
Module 1: Time Management - Practice 3: Essay		*	*
Module 1: Time Management - Apply		*	50 pts.
Module 1: Time Management - Assignment: Scaffolding		*	*
Module 1: Time Management - Assignment: Reading Plan		*	*
Module 1: Time Management - Assignment: Writing Assignment		*	*
Module 1: Time Management - Assignment: Procrastination		*	*
<b>Total</b>		*	60 pts.

**Gradebook Key**

- \* Items not yet graded
- Exams not yet entered
- 📁 Items with Dropbox Excerpt
- 📌 Extra Credit
- 🚫 Excluded from Course Grade
- 📊 View Exam Statistics
- [ ] Grades inside brackets are not shared with the student
- ⚪ Bold values indicate all items have not been graded.
- On certain views, you can click on column titles for Quick Grade Views

**Understanding What's Important: How to Use a Syllabus to Plan Your Time Activity**

**Instructions:** Review the attached syllabus for a psychology course.

First, find all test dates in October and calendar them by clicking the appropriate days in the calendar below. When complete click the submit button to check your answers.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

**Submit**

**MyStudentSuccessLab is easy to use and assign.**  
**Support is available in the following ways:**

- Visit [www.mystudentsuccesslab.com](http://www.mystudentsuccesslab.com) under "Tours and Training" and "Support."
- Contact your local sales professional.
- Send an inquiry to [Student.Success@pearson.com](mailto:Student.Success@pearson.com) for additional support.
- Join one of our weekly WebEx training sessions.
- Request on-campus training with a Faculty Advocate for qualified adoptions.
- Access technical support 24 hours a day, seven days a week, at <http://247pearsoned.custhelp.com>.

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**Succeed in college and beyond!**  
**Connect, practice, and personalize with MyStudentSuccessLab.**

[www.mystudentsuccesslab.com](http://www.mystudentsuccesslab.com)



**MyStudentSuccessLab** is an online solution designed to help students acquire the skills they need to succeed. They will have access to peer-led video presentations and develop core skills through interactive exercises and projects that provide academic, life, and career skills that will transfer to ANY course.

**It can accompany any Student Success text, or be sold as a stand-alone course offering.** Often students try to learn material without applying the information. To become a successful learner, they must consistently apply techniques to their daily activities.

**MyStudentSuccessLab provides students with opportunities to become successful learners:**

### **Connect:**

- Engage with real students through video interviews on key issues.

### **Practice:**

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

### **Personalize:**

- Apply what is learned to your life.
- Create a personal project that will be graded and can be posted to your portfolio.
- Journal online and set short- and long-term goals.



### **Resources**

- Tools to use: Plagiarism Guide, Dictionary, Calculators, and a Multimedia index of Interactive case studies and activities.

### **Text-Specific Study Plan**

- Chapter Objectives provide clear expectations.
- Practice Tests for each chapter of your text assess your current understanding.
  - Completion of each practice test generates a study plan that is unique to you.
- Enrichment activities identify strengths and weaknesses, provide immediate feedback, and link to additional media.
- Flashcards help you study and review.

### **Assessments**

- Includes Career Assessment tool, Learning Styles, and Personality Styles.



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FOR STUDENT SUCCESS AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

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**In the end, the finished product reflects your insight into what your students need to succeed, and puts it into practice. Visit us on the web to learn more at [www.pearsoncustom.com/studentsuccess](http://www.pearsoncustom.com/studentsuccess) 800-777-6872**



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