What skills do you wish your students had prior to taking your course? Reading comprehension, time management, listening, note-taking, critical thinking, test-taking? Let’s face it, most students could benefit from taking a course in learning how to learn. But who wants to take a study skills class?

My solution: sneak study skills into your class along with the content.

Course structure:
1. Select a textbook that has learning aids (study guides, online materials, and/or audiotapes) and encourage your students to use them. Point out features in the book that students can use to help them study and review text material.
2. Craft your syllabus carefully. By setting the right tone, you can motivate students. For example, here’s an “encouraging” excerpt from an English syllabus:
   “I realize that some students are shy and consequently do not participate much in class even though they are prepared. It would be unfair if they suffered on their grades because of this. Therefore, class participation can only help students and will never hurt them. But I do wish to emphasize that you should feel free to express your views in class, that your ideas will always be treated with respect, and that I will do everything I possibly can to create a class environment in which you will be comfortable participating in discussions.”
3. Design clear, meaningful assignments that enable students to accomplish course objectives.
4. Space the workload out evenly throughout the semester.
5. If students don’t master an assignment the first time, give them constructive feedback, and the chance to redo it. You may not want to do this for every assignment, but doing it for one early in the course “sets the bar” and encourages them to do quality work.

The first week:
1. If your class is small, set up interviews with students individually or in pairs to find out why they’re taking the course and what they want to get out of it. Not only will you learn about who’s in the class, but you’ll increase students’ commitment to work hard and communicate with you. If the class is large, use email to collect information about students and to establish connections.
2. Talk to students about how to study for your course. Give them a list of study techniques recommended by students who’ve taken the course and earned As.
3. Early in the course, have students use their textbooks in class. By using class time, you acknowledge the book’s value. If you can’t afford class time, have students do a homework assignment that they can’t complete without using the book.
4. Offer students time management suggestions. How much time should they be spending on the course? Talk about how daily study keeps the information fresh and helps avoid cramming. Show how longer assignments can be broken into small pieces.

Techniques for teaching:
1. Start class with something that gets their attention and then quickly review what was covered in the previous class.
2. Show students “tricks of the trade,” or how you learned the material. Talk aloud when you solve a problem. Show students what you do when you get stuck.
3. Provide a partial outline and have your students fill in the missing material during the lecture.
4. Leave five minutes at the end of each class for students to check their notes with those of their neighbor, review major ideas, and indicate what they thought was important and why.

Testing tips:
1. Assign heterogeneous study groups prior to the first exam, have them exchange contact information, and require a one-hour study session outside of class. Help them be more productive by providing a study guide and/or sample test questions they can submit for bonus points.
Do Students Really Know Their Academic Strengths?

By Brian A. Vander Schoe, Aurora University, IL – bsvanders@aurora.edu

Students focus on grades far more so than faculty would like. This is particularly true when students do not receive the grades they believe they deserve. They think that some assignments disadvantage them. I wondered how students would respond if they were given the opportunity to select the weight distribution for graded course components. The assignments would be preset, clearly described in the course syllabus and students would complete each one, but they could select the percentage of their grade accounted for by each assignment.

I took this approach in two sections of the Capstone: Strategic Management course. Students were given a grading agreement on the first day of class that asked them to select one of the designated percentage weights for each assignment that I would use in calculating their final course grade. I would now recommend letting the students have until the second week of class to finalize their decisions. They need time to get acquainted with the course and find out about their assignments in other courses. The four graded components in the course included: (1) case preparation and class participation (10 percent, 15 percent, or 20 percent); (2) individual written case analyses (30 percent, 35 percent, 40 percent, 45 percent, 50 percent, 55 percent, or 60 percent); (3) group case presentation (10 percent, 15 percent, or 20 percent); and (4) business strategy game (15 percent, 20 percent, 25 percent, 30 percent, or 35 percent). Once submitted, students were not permitted to make any changes to their designated distribution.

Students submitted a written rationale explaining how they decided on their particular distribution. Most said they chose the assignments they thought maximized their strengths as learners (53.8 percent) or they decreased the value of assignments that required skills they considered weaknesses (30.8 percent). I solicited feedback about this approach at the end of the course and most students were satisfied with the process. They perceived that they had more control over their final grade which motivated them to engage in the learning process.

If students really knew their academic strengths, their final grades would be higher than when I set the assignment percentages. However, the actual manipulation of the percentages did not determine how well students performed in the class. There was no significant difference in average final grades when students selected the assignment weights and when I set the weightings as I had done in the previous year.

In general, higher-achieving students rated the experience more positively than did the lower-achieving students. It may be that higher-achieving students have a better sense of their academic strengths. It is also possible that their locus of control is more internal, which contributes positively to learning. This research was conducted with graduating seniors, which probably influenced the outcome. Seniors have had more time in college to assess their academic performance in terms of knowing which assignments work well for them. First- and second-year students, even high achieving ones, may not be able to handle this approach as well.

Other research documents that students often expect grades much higher than they ultimately earn. This is particularly true of low-achieving students who may be less motivated when the teacher sets the grade weights. Giving students more control over grading at the outset by allowing them to select the percentage value of each assignment may increase their motivation. Doing so does not jeopardize how well they do in the course, or at least it didn’t in my course.
Three Things to Do with Cell Phones (Besides Confiscate Them)

By Karen Eifler, University of Portland
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My class had just finished covering three chalkboards with a rather dazzling array of concept clusters, illustrations, and links among disparate ideas. Clearly, a lot of learning had been generated. As I picked up the eraser to clear the board, I mentioned it was too bad that Chelsea and Eric (who were absent) had missed this vibrant discussion. “Well if you promise not to bust me, Dr. E., I could take a picture of all this and send it to them,” offered Claire. She pointed at the laminated sign in the front of the room that said, in huge font, PHONES ALLOWED IN CLASS.

Now, I am just as annoyed as the next person by the rude, thoughtless use of cell phones in public and have no patience with the thought of students using them to talk or text during my class. But Claire’s comment reminded me that most cell phones today are powerful little handheld computers and, like any tool, I could put them to use to facilitate and enhance several aspects of the teaching and learning I want to happen in my classroom. That was a new insight for me. It motivated me to start using cell phones in class rather than just being offended by them. Let me share three simple ways they’ve helped my students and me in recent months:

1) Archive content from the chalk or white board by taking a picture of it, as in the vignette referenced above.

Sure, interactive Smart Boards offer the same option, but for those of us who do not teach in rooms equipped with those, the cell phone camera is a fine low-tech option. Sometimes classes yield tremendous spontaneous insights that we may want to draw upon later. Claire sent the pictures to her classmates who missed class, and although I do not advocate making it easier on students who are absent, neither do I want them to miss out on crucial content. Claire also sent me the picture, and I have drawn upon this use of the cell phone frequently ever since, as now I have an artifact of teaching and learning and very often an image to use as a springboard into a new class session. We have also used the cell phone cameras to capture 3-D structures and role-plays that have come up in class to which we know we will want to refer later without necessarily saving the original items. The real coup was using my own cell phone camera to document the board notes from a free-wheeling faculty meeting that would have otherwise vanished. My most antitechnology colleagues were pleasantly taken aback.

2) Time small group activities using the built-in clock functions. In any group of three or four students, at least one (if not all) will have a cell phone. When we break out for intimate discussions or application tasks, I have the phone holders synchronize times and timers, and then let the groups do their work. This frees them from having to keep glancing at the room clock and keeps them more focused on the task. I have also experimented with all students using timers set on “vibrate” to monitor timed reading and individual in-class exercises and am pleased with the sense of calm this elicits, quite different from the tenser “countdown” atmosphere we have when I am the sole timekeeper.

3) Google it. There are times when what’s happening in class veers in an unanticipated direction and we need a fact I simply do not have at my disposal, nor does anyone in class. If it’s true that “all of us are smarter than one of us,” then literally bringing in the world via the Internet capacities of my students’ cell phones makes us collectively brilliant. We can do a quick search to find the missing details, and then move on. For readers concerned that the students might keep cyber-wandering once the fact is retrieved, I can report that having several students on the same hunt moves the process along, and once we have our answer, a swift application of the patented, expectant “teacher look” usually brings them back in. It has also been instructive to probe and ponder when diligent students come up with differing facts. These are great teachable moments that help me underscore why their research must not begin and end with Wikipedia—and the evidence is right there in their hands.

The list above is hardly exhaustive, but perhaps it can help us begin to refocus the cell-phones-in-class conversation. New technologies require us to harness our wisdom and imagination. They also challenge us to think differently about what we do and why. Based on what’s happened in my classroom I now propose that there are pedagogically defensible alternatives to silencing cell phones in our classrooms.

Online Seminar Call for Proposals

Magna Publications is accepting proposals for its online seminar series. For more information on how our online seminars work, visit www.magnapubs.com/calendar/index-cat-type.html.

To submit a proposal, visit www.magnapubs.com/mos/proposal.html.
One Teacher’s Story

In a recent article, Barbara Millis recounts her “odyssey” to become an effective teacher. She writes that, like most teachers, she did not start out a fully developed “good” teacher. “Most of us do not offer award-winning presentations our first day in the classroom. Learning to teach is often a slow and painful experience with skills, values, and beliefs … developing incrementally, often unconsciously.” (p. 17) But in addition to this kind of growth, most teachers experience “epiphanies,” “breakthroughs,” or those “aha moments” when there’s an insight that enlarges understanding. Suddenly something makes sense. It changes how the teacher thinks as well as what happens in class. Sometimes these changes are dramatic, even transformative.

Millis describes a number of breakthroughs that were instrumental in her growth and development as a teacher. The first occurred when she discovered that students could learn effectively in groups. She didn’t use group work when she first started teaching. Her experience as a student working in groups with other students had pretty much persuaded her that any self-respecting teacher would not have students working in groups. What Millis discovered (first through a workshop and subsequently in the literature) was cooperative learning, a highly structured form of group work characterized by positive interdependence (students need each other to complete the task) and individual accountability (no group grades, only assessments for individual accomplishments). Millis not only started using group work, she now leads workshops on the topic and has written one of the definitive books on cooperative learning in the college classroom (Cooperative Learning for Higher Education Faculty, co-authored with P. G. Cottrell).

But her growth as a teacher didn’t stop with her discovery of group work. She had another aha moment when she first encountered the research on deep learning. “I realized then that cooperative learning was an effective tool, not a be-all, end-all, stand-alone pedagogy. When I looked at the deep learning model, I realized that how I sequenced assignments and activities was of crucial importance.” (p. 19) As a consequence, her instruction became more carefully planned and intentional.

Then there was another small but compelling insight. “When we lecture, our synapses are firing away. There is, however, something wrong with this picture: if we truly want to promote learning, then our students’ synapses need to be the ones firing.” (p. 19) This aha moment resulted in still more assignment and activity restructuring. Now when students do a reading in her class, they approach key material five different times in five different contexts.

The real value of this article is not so much what Millis learned, although that is certainly interesting. The value derives from her attempt to record and reflect on her “odyssey.” Most teachers do grow and develop across a career, but few think about how their teaching has evolved and what has been instrumental in determining what they do when they teach. Doing so can be an impetus for more growth. As Millis’ account demonstrates, records of teaching “odysseys” are helpful to new teachers and they can stimulate thought and reflection for those not so new to teaching.

Most instructional growth does happen unconsciously, but some teachers do grow more than others do. Millis suggests why. “Effective teachers also teach intentionally, reflecting on their teaching and making changes. Many of them deliberately sequence assignments and activities to build for deeper learning …” They plan carefully to design structured assignments. Students understand what is expected of them. And, often because they are motivated by an inspired, inspiring teacher, they strive to meet or exceed those expectations.” (p. 22)


Online Learning: An Update

With the advent of distance education and online learning in the ’90s, any number of experts predicted widespread changes for higher education. Have those predictions been realized? Has online learning changed the face of higher education?

Online learning has become commonplace in higher education. Virtually every institution offers courses that can be taken online and, as of fall 2007, 3.9 million college students were taking advantage of those online course offering. Despite the emergence of many online learning opportunities, it doesn’t seem that higher education has changed all that much. At least that’s the contention of William Doyle, who says online learning has not revolutionized higher education. “What has happened instead is an absorption: most students have chosen to add online coursework onto their existing, classroom-based instruction.” (p. 56) He goes on to identify four predictions about online learning that pretty much haven’t come true.

1. Online students will be very different from students taking courses on campus. Students taking online courses look pretty much like their peers in terms of income, race, and ethnicity. Students taking online courses tend to be older (average age 29 compared with 26 for
A Voice Cries Out: Using the Phone in Online Teaching

By Timothy J. Haskell, Northwestern Connecticut Community College THaskell@nwcc.commnet.edu

As a fairly young teacher, I have only ever lived in an area and worked at an institution where online courses and degrees were the norm, so I have been excited about the opportunity to expand my experience by working in a virtual classroom during summer vacations.

I often teach a block of two courses for a popular online school. The courses are usually in the field of basic written communication and/or expository essay writing. Most of the students in each of the courses have not been in college for many years; most are older than I am, and most of these students approach my course, as well as online learning in general, with great trepidation. For the longest time, I struggled with how to make the students realize that I was not simply a signature on their course room message.

One day in July of 2007, I received a phone call that changed my technique and perspective on online teaching. The call began innocently enough: “Mr. Haskell. This is Mike, and I am having trouble understanding what you are asking for in this week’s writing assignment.” I logged on to my computer and spent about 10 minutes walking Mike (not his real name) through what I was asking for in the assignment. At the end of the call, Mike and I exchanged pleasantries, but it was his final comment that chastened me: “Thanks for the help, Mr. Haskell. It really helped hearing your voice and realizing that there was someone who really wanted to help me understand this assignment. Until now, I never really considered that a person was actually teaching the class.”

Mike’s comments really made me think. In fact, I do not think I was able to speak after hearing what he said. On the one hand, I felt badly that I had been administering my course such that at least one student questioned whether an actual living, breathing human being was teaching the class. On the other hand, I felt moved by Mike’s words. By simply spending a little time explaining the assignment to one student, I had actually made the student feel more comfortable about his abilities. I had given him confidence that someone on the other end was there to monitor and care about his success in the course.

As a result of this experience, I now spend the first week of every online class calling each student registered for the class. Our phone conversation may not last longer than two or three minutes, but attrition rates in my courses have dropped significantly since I started making these calls. In some cases, my online classes end up with 95 percent of the students completing the class. This is in sharp contrast to the 50 percent who used to drop out during the first few weeks.

Some of my colleagues tell me they will never try this—way too time consuming, they say. However, I have found that making a vocal connection with online students at the beginning of a course puts the students at greater ease. I would argue that all great teaching is time consuming. That’s one of the things that makes it great and that brings teachers such fulfillment.

Developing Students’ Self-Directed Learning Skills

Self-directed learning skills involve the ability to manage learning tasks without having them directed by others. They are skills necessary for effective lifelong learning and are one of many learning skills students are expected to develop in college. The expectation is that students will become self-directed learners as they mature and gain content knowledge. Here’s a study showing how students can become self-directed with explicit instruction.

This research was conducted in a junior-senior level international business course. Even so, a majority of the students (59 percent in the spring sections and 61 percent in fall sections) were not ready for independent learning as measured by their scores on the Self-Directed Learning Readiness Scale, a measure developed in other research and used extensively. Researchers were interested in an intervention that might improve these readiness scores. They hypothesized that students with low scores would improve in a structured environment that modeled the kind of learning skills used by self-directed learners. They structured the learning environment by asking students specific questions about their course work every week. They gave them explicit and detailed instructions for completing their assignments and very little freedom to self-define their work. Students with low, below average, and average scores were put in this structured learning environment.

Students with above average and high scores were put in an unstructured environment that provided them with much more freedom to shape their own work. They were asked to identify important aspects of the assigned readings and generate questions about them. They were able to define their research projects. In essence these students designed their own coursework.

Those in the structured environment increased their scores by 6.8 points and those in the unstructured environment increased their scores by 13 points on the Self-Directed Learning Readiness Scale. These increases were in comparison to students whose scores did not match the environment; a low scoring student who experienced an unstructured environment, for example. “The evidence suggests that
Twice as Nice: Using Co-Teaching as an Instructional Strategy

By Patty Kohler and John Trice, University of Central Arkansas
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As the quantity of knowledge continues to increase at exponential rates, it is difficult to be an expert in every aspect of the content that we are required to teach. Based on our experiences, we would like to recommend the use of co-teaching as a partial solution. As with any instructional approach, there are benefits to co-planning and co-delivering instruction, and there are pitfalls that merit consideration. In this article, we would like to share some of the valuable lessons we have learned.

What is co-teaching?
The use of co-teaching has its roots in public schools. Used there, it’s an excellent way to deliver instruction. This year, we’ve been engaged in the practice for an entire semester, these approaches to teaching benefit students and instructors. We’ve actually found that students seem to enjoy this method of delivery and are more engaged when two instructors are covering the room.

Co-teaching models
Here are highlights of some of the more common co-teaching models. In the one teach/one support model, one of the instructors takes a primary role for the delivery of instruction while the other offers students individual assistance, monitors individual work, observes students responses, and fulfills other supportive roles. The benefit to this model is that one instructor can focus on content while the other attends to classroom dynamics issues. The drawback is that one instructor can be seen as the helper if he/she only supports. However, if both take on both roles, then each can provide instruction in areas of strength or interest and they look like equal partners to students.

The two models parallel teaching and station teaching involve dividing students in the classroom. In parallel teaching, each instructor teaches the same content to a smaller group at the same time. If students are in a lab setting, this allows for close monitoring of their work. This model is useful for complex content or content that uses hands-on materials. Parallel teaching takes planning and pre-arranged agreement on time spent in the groups, but it can be a beneficial means of instructing.

We actually prefer the station teaching model that we have used with several colleagues. In this model, one instructor takes half the class of students and teaches them one aspect of content. The second instructor takes the other half and teaches a totally different aspect of the content. At a prearranged time, the groups switch and the two instructors repeat what they taught the first group. This model allows both instructors to focus more intently on one part of the content. We have used this model with two separate classrooms as well as in the same room. Students seem to enjoy moving from one location to another and spending time with a different instructor. A third model that involves two groups is alternative teaching. In this model, one instructor works with a larger group of students at the same time that a second instructor works with a smaller group to provide enrichment, re-teach, or cover missed materials. Generally, students return to the larger group after the smaller group is concluded.

The final co-teaching model is team teaching. Here, both instructors deliver instruction at the same time to the same group. Sometimes, instructors can bounce ideas back and forth and sometimes they can provide two points of view on the same topic. This can be an opportunity for students to see the lighter side of instruction, especially when there is give and take and humor is involved between the two. We have found that students seem to enjoy this method of delivery and are more engaged when two instructors are covering the room.

Concluding thoughts
Co-teaching is a rewarding and fun way to deliver content to students. Students benefit by having the content presented in more than one way and instructors benefit by having a collaborator. Co-teaching requires planning and some honest dialogue about personal beliefs regarding delivery of content. It also gives both instructors an opportunity to focus on their favorite aspects of the content, especially if each is willing to teach those less preferred aspects. Whether co-teaching occurs for one or two lectures or whether two instructors engage in the practice for an entire semester, these approaches to teaching benefit students and instructors.

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structure match enhances SDL [self-directed learning] skills. The empirical findings suggest also that courses designed to enhance students’ readiness for SDL can do so.” (p. 99)

The researchers do note that the lack of readiness for self-directed learning in an upper-division course indicates a need to work on developing these skills earlier in the curriculum and then providing more opportunities for self-directed learning across the curriculum.

Why Don’t My Students Think I’m Groovy?

By Christy Price, Dalton State College, GA
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A sk veteran teachers if students have changed, and they typically respond with a resounding, “YES!” My interest in this new breed of students was piqued when I began to notice unrealistically high expectations of success among my students combined with an astonishingly low level of effort on their part.

The gap that existed between students’ levels of effort and their expectation of success was only one of many Generation Y or Millennial issues thwarting my efforts to change the world through molding young minds, so I did what any other self-respecting teacher of psychology would do. After expressing my negative emotions through interpretive dance, I went to the literature and I conducted a qualitative analysis of narratives provided by more than 100 Millennial learners. Their perceptions in four areas were enlightening—they transformed my teaching.

Al Gore has his Inconvenient Truth, and I have mine—whether we like it or not, the Millennial learner is the new generation of student that we must influence, inspire, and serve.

Professors familiar with millennial student culture versus those who were not

1. Techno-savvy: Millennials view a professor’s ability to effectively utilize technology as an indicator of connectedness to their culture. One student wrote in frustration, “My professor is not up to date with technology. He is still confused about how to work the VCR!”

2. Currently relevant: Use of “real,” “relevant,” and “current” examples was one of the most obvious themes apparent among professors perceived as connected to millennial culture. As one commented, “Old shows like Taxi are not practical references that the average college student can relate to.”

3. Minimally lecturing: Of all the themes students touched on in this category, I was most surprised to see Millennials view our teaching methods as an indicator of our connection to their culture. Respondents thought professors who involved them in class with a variety of methods (not just lecture) as more connected to millennial culture.

4. Seriously humorous: Surprisingly, Millennials associated tone of voice with being connected to their culture. Instructors perceived as “boring” or “monotone” were seen as lacking connection to Millennial culture. Connected professors used “humor” and were “fun.”

5. Relaxed and relatable: Respondents perceived professors who “listened,” “related,” and “talked to students about their lives” as connected to Millennial culture, as opposed to those solely focused on course content. As one respondent lamented about her biology professor, “. . . he doesn’t really talk about anything that we are interested in … he only talks about strictly class stuff and he won’t go off onto anything else … he doesn’t seem like he is into anything but scientific things.” Imagine that, a biology professor who wants to talk about science!

Millennials also identified professors they perceived as “down to earth,” “informal,” “relaxed,” and “flexible” as being connected to the culture; while those described as “uptight,” “strict,” “intimidating,” or “condescending” were perceived as not connected to Millennial culture. Respondents relayed numerous examples of what they viewed as rigid course policies and harsh reactions used by professors perceived as not connected with their culture.

Millennials’ ideal professor

Perhaps not surprising, but what these students basically want is for us to be decent individuals who are responsive to them! We should give them credit for not expecting us all to have chili peppers at ratemyprofessors.com. Further analysis of responses reveals something intriguing missing from their lists. They seem to care more about who we are and how we interact with them than they care about what we know. This doesn’t mean that knowledge of subject and pedagogical expertise are insignificant, but perhaps they are simply a minimal qualification expected of us. Painfully obvious is how highly Millennial learners value positive interactions with their professors.

Millennials’ ideal learning environment

The most consistent theme present in the analysis of responses to the ideal learning environment was Millennials’ preference for a variety of teaching methods, as opposed to a “lecture only” format. I did note that these Millennial students did not attack the lecture method altogether, only when it was the teacher’s only method.

Millennials’ ideal assessments and assignments

When asked to describe their ideal assessments or assignments, several respondents left this particular section blank, perhaps suggesting the ideal assessment would be no assessment at all. The responses I did receive suggest that Millennials prefer a variety of assessments given regularly throughout the semester, as opposed to just having a mid-term and final. They also expressed a preference for “experiential” and “relevant” assessments. Finally, Millennials want their assignments “graded.” The idea that time, effort, or contribution merit extrinsic rewards is in keeping with the “everyone gets a trophy” culture in which Millennials were raised. This became very personally apparent to me a year ago when my own five-year-old informed me he would “give me a sticker” if I helped him clean his room.

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*FROM PAGE 1*

2. Give students frequent tests and constructive feedback throughout the course.
3. Give a practice test before the actual exam so students get a feel for the types of questions you ask. If you use essay questions, share an example of an A, C, and F answer.
4. Take class time to go over the first exam. Talk in detail about the questions most often missed. Encourage debate. Ask students for evidence that supports the answers they gave when studying for the next quiz?
5. Research-based methods: Millennials have grown up in an era in which they were constantly engaged. When they are not interested, their attention quickly shifts elsewhere. This research suggests Millennials prefer a variety of active learning methods.

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Summary

I summarize the instructional implications of my findings with these five R’s for engaging the Millennial:

1. **Relevance**: Millennials do not typically value information for information’s sake. One of the greatest challenges for teachers is to connect course content to the current culture and make learning outcomes and activities relevant.

2. **Rationale**: Unlike Boomers who were raised in a more authoritarian manner in which they more readily accept the chain of command, Millennials were raised in a non-authoritarian manner and are more likely to conform, comply, and adhere to course policies when teachers provide them with a rationale.

3. **Relaxed**: Millennials thrive in a less formal, more comfortable learning environment in which they can informally interact with the professor and one another.

4. **Rapport**: Millennials are extremely relational. They are more central to their parents’ lives than previous generations and are used to having the adults in their lives show great interest in them. They appreciate it when professors show that same interest, and they seem to be more willing to pursue learning outcomes when we connect with them on a personal level.

5. **Research-based methods**: Millennials have grown up in an era in which they were constantly engaged. When they are not interested, their attention quickly shifts elsewhere. This research suggests Millennials prefer a variety of active learning methods.

This is a condensed version of a June 2009 Excellence in Teaching essay that appeared on the PsychTeacher listserv coordinated by the Society for the Teaching of Psychology. The longer essay can be found at: www.daltonstate.edu/teachinglearning/pdf/cprice_millennials.pdf.

**ONLINE LEARNING**
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undergraduates taking courses on campus). The percentage of women taking online courses is a bit higher than the percentage of female undergraduates.

2. **Most students who enroll online will do so exclusively.** This too has not turned out to be true. About one-third of students enroll in online courses exclusively.

3. **Students will take classes online at distant institutions.** Online learning opportunities are a great resource for students in geographically isolated areas who do take courses at places removed from where they live. However, about three-fourths of students taking online courses enroll in a course offered by a campus less than 40 miles from home.

4. **For-profit higher education will consist primarily of online education.** The assumption here was that the for-profit institutions would offer cheaper education and thereby drive smaller providers out of business. It hasn’t happened. Students enrolled in online courses are divided just about evenly among public, private, and for-profit institutions.

“So online learning has turned out to be less groundbreaking than either its detractors or its supporters promised in the early days. Instead, its scope has turned out to be, at least at this point, less ambitious than anticipated, while many of the problems that were foreseen have not materialized. Instead online learning appears so far to be a modest but important add-on to the existing system.” (p. 58)