

# *The Millennial Learner: Challenges and Opportunities*

Saundra Y. McGuire, Ph.D.  
Director, Center for Academic Success  
Adj. Professor, Department of Chemistry  
Louisiana State University

## ▶ Desired outcomes

- You will have a better understanding of today's undergraduate students
- You will have strategies to make their college experience more productive
- You will see positive changes in your students' learning and behavior
- You will experience an increase in your job satisfaction

## ▶ The Millennial Learner 2001!

- Undergraduate Student
- Traditional College Age (17 – 24)
- Attending College in 2001 or beyond



## ▶ 1970's Learners vs. Millennial Learners

• Producer mentality	• Consumer Mentality
• Very limited Computer Access	• Ubiquitous Computer Access
• Tolerant of Non-engaging Pedagogical Techniques	• Impatient with Non-Engaging Pedagogical Techniques



My Summer Vacation


THE TOO-MUCH-INFORMATION AGE

## ▶ 1970's Faculty vs. Millennial Faculty

• 25 years older than the students	• 25 years older than the students
• Used primarily lecture format	• Use primarily lecture format
• Knew little about learning mechanisms and strategies	• Know little about learning mechanisms and strategies

▶ **Communication Gap**

**Middle Aged Faculty vs Millennial Student**  
47 years old      21.6 years old




▶ **Counting Vowels in 30 seconds**


How accurate are you?

▶ **1970's College vs Millennial College**

**Teacher Centered Institution**      **Vs Learner Centered Institution**



▶ **Consumer Mentality**



▶ **BOTTOM-LINE LEARNERS**

Learning not for sake of learning and thrill of knowledge

Studying to pass the test, pass the course, and get the degree

▶ **FISHING RODS VS. SEAFOOD DINNERS**

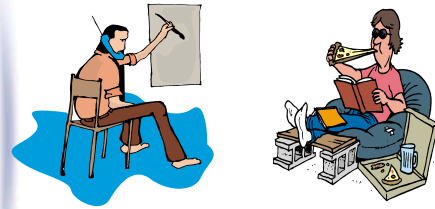
**Faculty Must Make the Case For Learning**

**Active, engaged learning is key**

## Why the Millennial Learner Needs Engagement

- Increasing number of students diagnosed with ADD/ADHD
- Increasing alcohol consumption among college students
- Lack of basic study skills

## Increasing Numbers of ADD/ADHD Diagnoses



In 1998: 3.69% of entering freshmen were diagnosed with learning disorders, including ADD/ADHD

## Increase in Binge Drinking

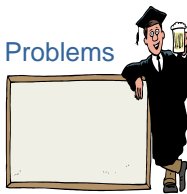
In 1999, 2 of 5 students (44%) were binge drinkers.

1999 Harvard School of Public Health College Alcohol Study

Resulting Alcohol Related Problems

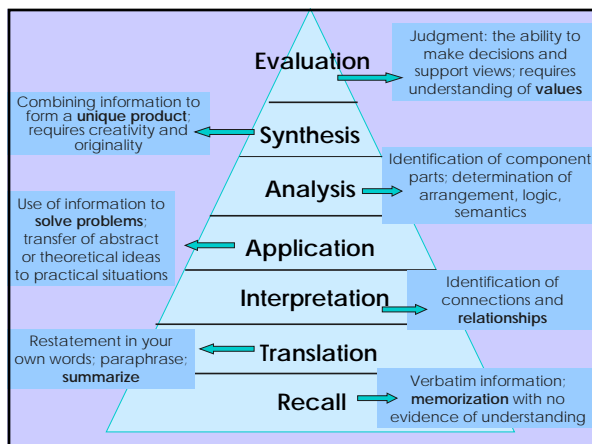
Missed Class (62.5%)

Falling behind (46.3%)



## Lack of Basic Study Skills

Fall 1998 entering freshmen had averaged one hour a day of studying in their senior year of high school.



## Students with a GPA of 3.7 or higher...

- ✦ STUDIED OVER 30 HRS. PER WEEK OUT OF CLASS
- ✦ REVIEWED MATERIAL PRIOR TO CLASS
- ✦ STAYED 1-2 CHAPTERS AHEAD IN TEXT
- ✦ REVIEWED NOTES AFTER CLASS
- ✦ VISITED PROFESSOR/INSTRUCTOR/TUTOR
- ✦ STUDIED IN SMALL GROUPS (3-5) SEVERAL TIMES PER WEEK
- ✦ ASKED QUESTIONS, ASKED QUESTIONS, ASKED QUESTIONS!!!

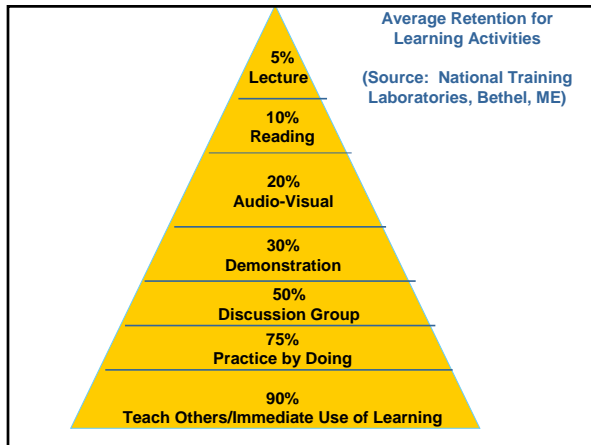
### Students with a GPA of 2.0 or less...

- ❖ STUDIED 8-12 HRS. PER WEEK OUT OF CLASS
- ❖ DID NOT REVIEWED MATERIAL PRIOR TO CLASS
- ❖ STAYED 1-2 CHAPTERS BEHIND IN TEXT
- ❖ DID NOT REVIEWED NOTES AFTER CLASS
- ❖ RARELY DISCUSSED CLASSWORK WITH OTHERS
- ❖ RARELY ASKED QUESTIONS
- ❖ IN EFFECT, THEY WERE STILL IN HIGH SCHOOL

FOUR YEAR STUDY, R. B. LANDIS, CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, 1995

### Stages of Learning

- Acquisition (understanding the information)
- Fluency (being able to discuss it in your own words)
- Application
- Generalization



### Pedagogical Strategies that Engage the Learner

- Collaborative Learning, Peer-Led Learning, Supplemental Instruction
- Problem Based Learning, Case Based Learning
- Service-Learning
- Learning Communities, Residential Colleges

### Programs and Strategies that work at LSU

- Supplemental Instruction
  - The Absent Professor program
  - Continuous process of learning
  - Intense study strategies
- [www.cas.lsu.edu](http://www.cas.lsu.edu)

Faculty and Staff  
Must Help Students  
Learn How to Learn

## Continuous Process of Learning

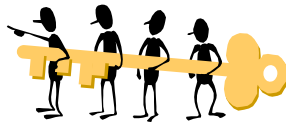
- ★ Phase One: Read or preview chapter(s) to be covered in class... before class. (Create chapter maps)
  - Phase Two: Go to class! Listen actively, take notes, participate.
  - ★ Phase Three: Review and process class notes as soon after class as possible.
  - Phase Four: Incorporate intense study sessions.
- Repeat

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## Intense Study Sessions

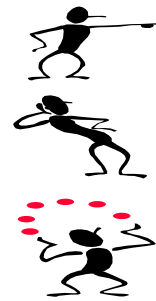
- **5 minutes:** Set goals for next 40 min.
- **40 minutes:** Read text more selectively/highlight  
Make doodles/notes in margins  
Create mnemonics  
Create maps
- **5 minutes** Review what you have just studied
- **10 minutes** Take a break
- **Repeat**

## Keys to Studying Smarter



- There is a hierarchy of learning levels.
- It takes time to climb the ladder of understanding.
- Knowing your learning style increases learning.

## Learning Styles



- **Visual**  
concept maps  
charts, diagrams
- **Auditory**  
lectures, debates,  
discussions
- **Kinesthetic**  
simulations, field trips,  
research projects

## Helping Students Modify Inappropriate Behavior

- **Specify appropriate behavior early and often**
- **Reward appropriate behavior**
- **Impose consequences for inappropriate behavior**

## The Role of Academic Support Centers in Facilitating Learning

Provide faculty and TA's with information on characteristics of their students and on learning strategies they can teach students

Assist faculty in advising students about effective study skills (Absent Professor Program)

Help students identify the problem with their performance (e.g. vowel counting vs. word usage)



### *In conclusion*

*Millennial learners CAN change their attitudes and behaviors about learning. BUT, faculty and staff must help them do this.*



### Final Note

Please visit our website at [www.cas.lsu.edu](http://www.cas.lsu.edu).

We have on-line workshops and information that introduce you and your students to effective study strategies. Please feel free to contact me at [smcgui1@lsu.edu](mailto:smcgui1@lsu.edu), or call me at 225.578.6749. I wish you great success this year.

Sandra McGuire