



OTRP online

Office of Teaching Resources in Psychology

PSY 255 – Evolutionary Psychology

Lebanon Valley College, Fall 2005

Dr. Barry X. Kuhle

Monday, Wednesday, & Friday, 11:00 – 11:50

Lynch 181

Professor Information

Office: Lynch 287F

Office Hours: *Monday = 2:00 – 3:00, Tuesday = 3:45 – 4:45, Wednesday, 4:00 – 4:45, Thursday, 3:45 – 4:45*, and by appointment to meet your needs. Appointments can be made (and are preferable) for meeting times that are more convenient for you. Simply send me an email requesting one and we'll set it up. I encourage you to request an appointment to discuss the class, what psychology graduate school is like, what one can do with a psychology degree, etc...

Email: kuhle@lvc.edu

Office Telephone: 867-6199

Brief Autobiography

I was born and raised on Long Island, New York. After receiving my B.A. in psychology from Binghamton University, I made my academic manifest destiny west to study evolutionary psychology at The University of Texas at Austin. My research interests lie mainly in the area of interpersonal relationships, with a primary focus on the evolved psychological mechanisms that underlie commitment in romantic relationships. I am also interested in the evolution and development of menopause and of jealousy. As for my non-academic life, I enjoy playing racquetball, baseball, basketball, and golf. I'm also a huge movie buff (e.g., P.T. Anderson, Aronofsky, Fincher, Kubrik, Linklater, K. Smith, Tarrantino) and music fanatic (e.g., U2, Radiohead, Counting Crows, Dave Matthews Band, Led Zeppelin, Coldplay, The Killers, Jay-Z). My life long love / new bride and I reside in Hershey, PA.

Psychology Department Philosophy

The Psychology Department at LVC seeks to foster the development of a thoughtful, flexible, and scientific approach toward human behavior that is guided by critical analyses of empirical research. Upon graduating, psychology majors will be prepared to pursue applied entry-level positions in the work force and for graduate studies in a range of areas such as psychology, neuroscience, social work, medicine, business, education, and law. The program allows students to arrive at a thorough understanding of the myriad processes underlying behavior, with a broader goal of applying this knowledge to one's own life and society on the whole (adapted from p. 134 of the 2005-2006 Catalog).

Evolutionary Psychology Course Description and Objectives

This is an introductory course aimed at undergraduates with little or no experience with evolutionary psychology. Evolutionary psychology is the scientific study of human nature that focuses on understanding the psychological adaptations that evolved to solve ancestral survival and reproductive problems. We begin with a brief historical review of key themes in psychology and evolutionary biology. We then proceed to the adaptive problems of survival, long-term mating, sexuality, parenting, kinship, cooperation, aggression and warfare, conflict between the sexes, status, prestige, and social dominance. The course concludes by arguing for a unified field that integrates the disparate branches of psychology.

LVC is one of approximately 30 universities/colleges in North America to offer a comprehensive undergraduate evolutionary psychology course. Whatever your major, interests in psychology, and eventual career goals, evolutionary psychology will prove interesting, useful, and thought-provoking. Successful completion of this course will enable you to 1) understand Charles Darwin's proposed method of evolution, natural selection, 2) understand the major methods, theories, and findings in evolutionary psychology, and 3) apply that knowledge to your everyday life. *Knowledge of how and why your mind works the way it does will best allow you to use it to tackle the myriad obstacles that life throws at you!*

Location in the Psychology Major and General Education Program Requirements

The prerequisites for this course are Psy 111, 112, Psy 120, or 130 (i.e., Gen Psy I, Gen Psy II, Intro to Exp Psych, or Stats and Data Analysis). This course counts towards the 3-credit course needed from the "social processes" area of the psychology major program. This course does not meet any general education requirements.

Required Books

Buss, D. M. (2004). *Evolutionary psychology: The new science of the mind*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

- This was the first textbook written for evolutionary psychology. The author is a founding father of the discipline. Even after six years and the debut of at least ten other texts, Buss' text, now in its second edition, is the most clear, comprehensive, and engaging textbook available.
- Costs \$77.95 from the campus bookstore.

Dawkins, R. (1996). *The blind watchmaker*. New York, NY: Norton.

- Richard Dawkins is one of the top three science writers alive. His clarity of thought and expression are second to none. This book will serve to expand upon the intricacies and to unravel the myriad complexities inherent in Darwin's 1859 theory of natural selection.
- Costs \$15.95 from the campus bookstore.

Teaching Philosophy

I take great pride in a teacher's responsibility to foster student learning. I strive to engage my students' interests by requiring high standards and using entertaining teaching methods. My role as a teacher is to foster critical, creative thinking, and intellectual risk-taking. Your role as a student is to work hard and HAVE FUN with this class. I encourage you to ask questions, interject humorous anecdotes, and seek clarification as needed. I most enjoy teaching psychology and want you to most enjoy learning it. **ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE, PLEASE!!!**

Attendance

Attendance is required for this class. Missed exams cannot be made up, and missed notes cannot be borrowed from me, so you must **COME TO EACH AND EVERY CLASS!** Much of the material covered in lecture is not in the textbook, and will be included on exams. If you miss a class you are responsible for knowing any class announcements given in your absence. If you know that you must miss a class for a documented school related activity (e.g., school trip, sporting/band/choir event) you must let me know, **in writing**, at least one week prior to the anticipated absence.

Electronic Communication

I'll be using Blackboard, an online course management program to post grades, PowerPoint lectures, Word documents, and to email you. You are **REQUIRED** to access Blackboard and to regularly retrieve the emails I send to your LVC account. The username and passwords needed to access Blackboard and to access your LVC email account are the same. Contact Information Technology Services (ITS) at x6072 or in the basement of Lynch if you need your username and passwords. To log on to Blackboard point your web browser to: blackboard.lvc.edu/ . Read Appendix C for additional information about electronic communication in this class.

Special Accommodations

If you have a physical, medical, psychological, or learning disability that may impact your attendance or require accommodation, please let me know. In order to ensure that your learning needs are appropriately met, you will need to provide documentation of your disability or medical condition to Ms. Yvonne Foster, Coordinator of Disability Services (Humanities 206-D, 867-6071). The Office of Disability Services will then provide a letter of verification of disability that describes the accommodations needed for this class. If you have a documented need for special testing arrangements, it is your responsibility to arrange them with me prior to each exam.

Grading

Exams = 70%

There will be 4 exams (non-comprehensive) and an optional comprehensive final exam.

Comprehension of the lectures and assigned readings will be assessed with the exams. Exams will consist of a combination of multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, and short-answer questions. I will provide you with sample exam questions before the first exam. You will have 45 minutes to complete each exam. If you're satisfied with your 4 exam grades you may skip the optional comprehensive final exam..

- Exams must be taken as scheduled. An abundance of other exams/papers or extracurricular activities is **not** grounds for rescheduling an exam. In fact, there are **no** grounds for rescheduling an exam. I do not give rescheduled exams.
- Missed exams *cannot* be made-up. **If you miss an exam, for any reason (illness, death in family, sporting event, hangover, alien abduction, etc.), you must take the final exam to replace it. I do not give make-up exams. No exceptions.** The optional comprehensive final exam will be similar in nature and length to the "regular" exams: a collection of multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, and short-answer questions.
- If you are not satisfied with an exam grade, you may take the final exam and replace your lowest exam grade with your score on the final.
- Your final exam grade cannot hurt you *unless* it is more than 20 points lower than your lowest regular exam grade. In this case, the lower final exam grade *will* replace the lowest previous exam grade.
- Thus, 4 exams (17.5% each) will count toward your course grade.

Quizzes = 10%

On Fridays between September 9th and November 18th (except October 14th, an exam day), ten quizzes on an assigned chapter in Dawkins' *The Blind Watchmaker* will be given. These quizzes are designed to assess your understanding of the reading. Each quiz will consist of 1-5 multiple choice, short answer, or fill-in-the-blank questions. Quizzes can only be taken during the first 5 minutes of class. Missed quizzes cannot be made up. Your lowest quiz grade will be dropped, resulting in 10 quizzes (out of the syllabus quiz and the ten quizzes on Dawkins' book) counting towards your course grade.

Hypothesized Psychological Mechanism = 15%

You will schedule a 15 minute appointment to meet with me between December 1st and December 13th to discuss an original hypothesized evolved psychological mechanism that you've generated. While you will discuss the proposed mechanism orally in a relatively causal fashion (no need to dress up or stand up), you must also provide a 1-2 page **outline** (not an essay) of your proposed mechanism. Be sure to provide a (catchy?) title for your proposed mechanism. You will discuss in detail:

- 1) the adaptive problem that your proposed mechanism was designed to "solve",
- 2) who had to solve the adaptive problem (e.g., men, women, both, kids only, only those in warm climates),
- 3) why this was an important recurrent adaptive problem (e.g., outline the survival/reproductive costs of not solving the problem and the benefits of solving the problem),
- 4) how your proposed psychological mechanism helps solve the problem (discuss (a) the input information the mechanism will be sensitive to, (b) the evolved decision rules that will process the information, and (c) the output of the mechanism that will help solve the adaptive problem),
- 5) how you can test your hypothesis (i.e., how one could ethically and systematically collect data that would bare upon the hypothesis).

This will likely be the most difficult assignment of the class. This assignment forces you to apply the knowledge you've acquired about our evolved psychology and about investigating our evolved psychology to a relatively unexplored and wholly original realm. Your scientific originality, creativity and deep comprehension of this course will be on full display. Additional information about this assignment will be provided on November 18th.

Paper = 5%

A two-to-four page paper is due at the beginning of class on **November 21st**. The paper should be typed, one-sided, stapled (not paper-clipped), paginated, and double-spaced, with 12-point font and 1-inch margins. I'd like you to choose one (or two) chapters from the book, and in light of the information contained in the chapter(s), 1) reflect on your past life and 2) discuss how, if at all, you will lead your life differently. I'm basically looking for you to filter your past and future actions, decisions, and mindsets through the knowledge you have garnered from this course. For example, if you choose the "Conflict between the sexes" chapter, you could discuss (in addition to other things) your past conflicts with the opposite sex and how you plan to avoid or deal with such conflicts in the future in light of what you learned about men's and women's evolved psychologies.

As an addendum to your paper, I'd like for your to briefly discuss a piece of media (song, poem, fiction book passage, film / television scene, etc.) that aptly illustrates or evokes the evolved psychology you discussed in your paper. Please include the relevant passage from the media with this addendum (e.g., the song lyrics, book passage). I'll share the most interesting "evo psyified" media with the rest of the class in December.

Papers will be graded on their clarity of thought, quality of expression, and command of the course material. Spelling and grammar count. Papers not turned in by the beginning of class on **November 21st** will be docked 5% for each calendar day they are late. No need to cite references. Be sure to demonstrate thorough knowledge of the course material!

Final course grades will be assigned as follows:

92.5 – 100% = A	72.5 – 76.4% = C
89.5 – 92.4% = A-	69.5 – 72.4% = C-
86.5 – 89.4% = B+	66.5 – 69.4% = D+
82.5 – 86.4% = B	62.5 – 66.4% = D
79.5 – 82.4% = B-	59.5 – 62.4% = D-
76.5 – 79.4% = C+	< 59.4% = F

Academic Dishonesty

The providing and receiving of any unauthorized assistance related to course requirements is absolutely prohibited. You are allowed, of course, to study with students outside of class, but any unauthorized assistance received or provided for any graded material will not be tolerated. In addition, plagiarizing another's work (e.g., using someone else's work without proper reference in a writing assignment) is prohibited. Any violation of this policy will result in a failing grade for that assignment, and possibly for the course as well. Please refer to the LVC Student Handbook and College Catalog (p. 15) for additional information and for consequences of academic dishonesty.

You may be asked to submit some assignments for review by an on-line plagiarism service. This service will compare the content of your work to content found on the internet and several proprietary databases. Any work submitted to this service may become part of the service's permanent collection of submitted papers. After your work is submitted, the service will generate an originality report which will be sent to your instructor. Any student who submits plagiarized work will be subject to the penalties outlined in LVC's Academic Honesty Policy found on pages 113-114 of the Student Handbook.

Course Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Class Topic / Quiz Content</u>	<u>Buss Chapter</u>
Aug. 31	Fundamentals of Evolutionary Psychology	1
Sept. 2	Syllabus Quiz / Fundamentals of Evolutionary Psychology	1 & Time article
Sept. 5	Fundamentals of Evolutionary Psychology	1
Sept. 7	Fundamentals of Evolutionary Psychology	1
Sept. 9	The Scientific Pursuit of Evo Psy / QUIZ Dawkins Intro, Preface, Ch. 1	2
Sept. 12	The Scientific Pursuit of our Evolved Psychology	2
Sept. 14	Human Survival Problems	3
Sept. 16	Human Survival Problems / Trip Reservation Due / QUIZ Dawkins Ch. 2	3
Sept. 19	Human Survival Problems	3
Sept. 21	<u>EXAM 1</u>	
Sept. 23	Women's Long-term Mating Strategies / QUIZ Dawkins Ch. 3	4
Sept. 26	Women's Long-term Mating Strategies	4
Sept. 28	Women's Long-term Mating Strategies	4
Sept. 30	Men's Long-term Mating Strategies / QUIZ Dawkins Ch. 4	5
Oct. 3	Men's Long-term Mating Strategies	5
Oct. 5	Men's Long-term Mating Strategies	5
Oct. 7	Men's & Women's Short-term Mating Strategies / QUIZ Dawkins Ch. 5	6
Oct. 10	Men's & Women's Short-term Mating Strategies	6
Oct. 12	Men's & Women's Short-term Mating Strategies	6
Oct. 14	<u>EXAM 2</u>	
Oct. 17	No Class (Enjoy Fall Break!)	
Oct. 19	Parenting	7
Oct. 21	Parenting / QUIZ Dawkins Ch. 6	7
Oct. 24	Parenting	7
Oct. 26	Kinship	8
Oct. 28	Kinship / QUIZ Dawkins Ch. 7	8
Oct. 31	Kinship	8
Nov. 2	Cooperation Among Non-relatives	9
Nov. 4	Cooperation Among Non-relatives / QUIZ Dawkins Ch. 8	9
Nov. 7	Cooperation Among Non-relatives	9
Nov. 9	<u>EXAM 3</u>	
Nov. 11	Aggression & Warfare / QUIZ Dawkins Ch. 9	10
Nov. 12	<i>Field Trip to AMNH's Hall of Biology & Evolution: 7:30 AM - @ 11:00 PM*</i>	
Nov. 14	Aggression & Warfare	10
Nov. 16	Aggression & Warfare	10
Nov. 18	Info. on Oral Pres. / Conflict Between the Sexes / QUIZ Dawkins Ch. 11 (skip Ch. 10)	11
Nov. 21	Conflict Between the Sexes / PAPER DUE	11
Nov. 23	Conflict Between the Sexes	11
Nov. 25	No Class (Enjoy Thanksgiving Break!)	
Nov. 28	Conflict Between the Sexes	11
Nov. 30	Conflict Between the Sexes	11
Dec. 2	Status, Prestige, & Social Dominance	12
Dec. 5	Status, Prestige, & Social Dominance	12
Dec. 7	Status, Prestige, & Social Dominance	12
Dec. 9	<u>EXAM 4</u>	

OPTIONAL COMPREHENSIVE FINAL EXAM: Thursday, December 15th, 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM

Other Course Policies

- 1) I hold high expectations for my students. My exams are challenging.
- 2) No extra credit is available for this course. Please do not request it.
- 3) Exams must be taken as scheduled. Missed exams *cannot* be made-up. If you miss an exam you may take the optional comprehensive final exam to replace it.
- 4) Performance, not effort, is what determines your final grade.
- 5) You are strongly encouraged to ask a classmate for notes if you miss a lecture. Notes cannot be borrowed from me.
- 6) Feel free to eat and drink (non-alcoholic beverages only!) in class as long as you don't disturb others with your munchin' and slurpin'.
- 7) Turn off all cell phones, pagers, and beepers before class begins.
- 8) The last day to change registration or withdraw from a course is November 4th (for *first* semester freshman, this day is December 9th).
- 9) **Do not talk with other students during class. Please share your thoughts with me and the entire class, not just a select few! Talking with classmates distracts you, your classmates, and me, and will not be tolerated.**

*Field Trip

We are fortunate enough to be within driving distance of “the only major exhibit in the country to present an in-depth investigation of the mysteries of human evolution.” We will avail ourselves of this good fortune by taking a “Saturday Cities” bus to Manhattan on Saturday, November 12. Once in Manhattan we will make our way over to the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) to view its Hall of Human Biology and Evolution and its various fossil halls (including the two world famous dinosaur halls!).

Attendance on this field trip is mandatory. You must sign-up for this trip by noon on September 17th by contacting Karen Grubb (HUM 306, x6355, grubb@lvc.edu). If you cannot attend due to a documented school related activity (athletic/band/choir event) you must let me know, in writing, by noon on September 16th. **Failure to either sign-up for this trip or notify me in writing why you cannot attend by noon on September 16th will result in a 0 for Quiz 2.** Those who cannot attend will have an alternative assignment that I will discuss in late October.

Resident students may pick up a bag lunch in the dining hall prior to departure by notifying Ms. Grubb. That being said, I highly encourage you to forgo LVC's, how you say, “interesting” lunch options and instead partake in one of the many and varied wonderful eateries that Manhattan has to offer. This will, of course, have to come out of your own pocket, but your tummy and taste buds will thank you.

For more information about all the AMNH has to offer, point your web browser to:
www.amnh.org/exhibitions/

Disclaimer

All of the procedures and schedules described in this course syllabus are subject to change due to extenuating circumstances. In the event that such changes become necessary, you will be notified of the course adjustments as soon as possible.

APPENDIX A

Suggestions About How to Study

Particularly following the first exam, students often ask about how to study for PSY 255. There is no reason to wait until that time to become concerned about study techniques. I have put together a few suggestions below from the published literature on study skills. It goes without saying that these tactics should be applied as soon as possible: They will *not* bail you out if you wait until you have already done poorly on one or more exams.

1. Look over the assigned readings BEFORE you start reading. Each chapter is organized into subsections. Indeed, organization is the hallmark of textbooks. Read these subsections. Review after reading each subsection. Take breaks after each subsection.

2. At the end of each subsection, stop and ask yourself what you have learned. Ask yourself, without looking at the book, what the major points are and what the key terms were. If you can't define the terms and remember the points in a subsection right after reading them, you didn't read at a useful level and must re-read. At the end of each chapter do a review of all the subsection, being sure to understand how each subsection relates to each other.

As you find important things, consider marking them with a highlighter or something in the margin. Better yet, ORGANIZE the ideas by drawing pictures, making lists, or composing OUTLINES to better encode the information in your memory. Important things are not just definitions. They also include study findings, theories, and summaries of areas of research. Read for about 45 minutes or so--after that your efficiency drops. Stop and do laundry for 15 minutes or something before you go back to reading.

3. Work on psychology by doing the assignments by the time they are due, a little bit at a time. No athlete would prepare for a big game by sitting around doing nothing for weeks and then staying up late the night before intensively working out. The same principle applies to learning. LEARN THE MATERIAL AS YOU GO ALONG. You will have to take responsibility for learning the material. You should not have to spend too many hours studying for the exams. By the time the exam is near, you should already know the material.

4. Study in a place that is quiet and in which you will not be disturbed. Plan to work very hard when you read and study. Many failing students think that studying is nothing more than reading the book over and over with the stereo blasting or the TV on and people running in and out while the phone rings. They spend hours at this, but they are not really doing anything useful. To make an analogy--it would be like trying to increase physical fitness by walking slowly and having an ice cream cone every two blocks. This is fun, but it does not result in a hard body. Laying around in front of a TV chatting with friends while scanning a book is also fun, but it is a complete waste of time as far as learning is concerned. To get fit, one must work the muscles, get out of breath and that sort of thing. In order to learn, one must WORK hard and intensely, focusing on the task at hand. No pain, no gain.

5. Study in the time of day during which you are most alert. Do not put studying off until you can hardly keep your eyes open. Successful students report that they make good use of the hour or two they have between classes by studying. It is easy to waste that time by returning home and doing things of little consequence. Much work can be accomplished during the day by finding quiet places that are near to where your classes meet and hitting the books.

6. It is probably not worthwhile to re-copy your lecture notes after class. It is a very good idea, however, to take notes as thoroughly as possible in class, leaving some space as you are taking them. Then, as soon after class as you can, review the notes and clarify things you have not recorded in sufficient detail.

7. Take responsibility for your own performance. Blaming roommates, textbooks, time of class meetings, or whatever will not improve your performance. If you are not spending two to three hours in good, dense, quiet study for each hour in class, you are not doing enough. This point is usually ignored by students who do poorly. Following these steps exactly will not be easy at first. If you do poorly on an exam, the first thing you will have to admit is that you have to do something DIFFERENT if you expect your grades to be different. A second thing you might have to admit is that you may have managed to get through high school and subsequent life without maximum efficiency in learning how to learn. Most students who do not do well are either (1) not working long enough or (2) not working efficiently.

Additional Studying Strategies

Although you are expected to study and ultimately learn a wide range of material, you are rarely taught any systematic strategies allowing you to study more effectively. However, psychologists have devised several excellent techniques for improving study skills, two of which are described below. By employing one of these procedures—known by the acronyms “SQ3R” and “MURDER”—you can increase your ability to learn and retain information and to think critically, not just in psychology classes but in all academic subjects.

SQ3R

The SQ3R method includes a series of *five* steps, designated by the initials S-Q-R-R-R.

The first step is to *survey* the material by reading the parts of the chapter that give you an overview of the topics covered. Some textbooks contain, for example, chapter outlines, chapter summaries, lists of learning objectives, prologues and epilogues, or some combination of these features and others.

The next step—the “Q” in SQ3R—is to *question*. Formulate questions—either aloud or in writing—before actually reading a section of the material. Some textbooks contain critical thinking questions that are a good source of questions. However, do not rely on them entirely. Making up your own questions is crucial. You may want to write them in the margins of your book. This process helps you to focus on the key points of the chapter, while at the same time putting you in an inquisitive frame of mind.

It is now time for the next, and most important, step: to *read* the material. Read carefully and, even more importantly, read actively and critically. For instance, while you are reading, answer the questions you have asked yourself. You may find yourself coming up with new questions as you read along; that’s fine, since it shows you are reading inquisitively and paying attention to the material. Critically evaluate material by considering the implications of what you are reading, thinking about possible exceptions and contradictions, and examining the assumptions that lie behind the assertions made by the author.

The next step—the second “R” is the most unusual. This “R” stands for *recite*, meaning that you look up from the book and describe and explain to yourself, or a study partner, the material you have just read and answer the questions you posed earlier. Do it aloud; this is one time when talking to yourself is nothing to be embarrassed about. The recitation process helps you to clearly identify your degree of understanding of the material you have just read. Moreover, psychological research has shown that communicating material to others, or reciting it aloud to yourself, assists you in learning it in a different—and a deeper—way than material that you do not intend to communicate. Hence, your recitation of the material is a crucial link in the studying process.

The final “R” refers to review. As the chapter in your textbook on memory points out, reviewing is a prerequisite to fully learning and remembering material you have studied. Look over the information, reread the features in your textbook that provide you with an overview of the chapter, be sure again that you can answer any critical thinking questions, review questions, and questions you posed for yourself. Reviewing should be an active process, in which you consider how different pieces of information fit together and develop a sense of the overall picture.

MURDER

The MURDER system, although not altogether dissimilar to SQ3R, provides an alternative approach to studying (Dansereau, 1978).

In MURDER, the first step is to establish an appropriate *mood* for studying by setting goals for a study session and choosing a time and place so that you will not be distracted. As mentioned previously, it is best if you schedule regular blocks of study time and select one place that you reserve specifically for studying.

Next comes reading for *understanding*, paying careful attention to the meaning of the material being studied.

Recall is an immediate attempt to recall the material from memory, without referring to the text.

Digesting the material comes next; you should correct any recall errors, and attempt to organize and store newly learned material in memory.

You should work next on *expanding* (analyzing and evaluating) new material, trying to apply it to situations that go beyond the applications discussed in the text. By incorporating what you have learned into a larger information network in memory, you will be able to recall it more easily in the future.

Finally, the last step is to *review*. Just as with the SQ3R system, MURDER suggests that systematic review of material is a necessary condition for successful studying.

APPENDIX B **Taking Exams**

There are some principles of exam performance known only to successful, test-wise students. Millman (1966) defined test-wiseness as the ability to use knowledge of the characteristics of tests and the testing process to improve one's performance. Studies show that test-wise students do better on exams (Rogers & Bateson, 1994; Towns & Robinson, 1993). Here are the basic principles:

Know your stuff. The single most important point is to have a good, solid knowledge and understanding of the material being tested. Using the tips for doing well in college and managing your time, as well as the study strategies described above, can help you to achieve this kind of knowledge and understanding.

Schedule your time. Look the test over and calculate the time you can afford to spend on each item.

Read completely. Be sure to read the entire item. If the item is multiple choice, try to answer it before looking at the alternatives so that you will know which is correct.

Eliminate options. If you don't immediately know the answer, eliminate unlikely options quickly, and then choose among the remainder. Your score may well be higher (Kim & Goetz, 1993).

Look to other items. It is common for information in one item to provide an answer or partial answer to another.

Don't think too much. If you don't know an answer, put down your best guess and come back later if time permits. Mark questions you are most uncertain of so that you can return to them later.

Don't leave items blank. Despite rumors to the contrary, it is to your advantage to guess unless the professor will deduct substantial credit for guessing (Budescu & Bar-Hillel, 1993).

Ask questions. Ask the professor to clarify an item if necessary.

Review your answers. Time permitting, go back over the entire test before turning it in. If you are short on time, concentrate on the difficult items you marked.

Change your answers! I emphasize this one because the idea that you should never change an answer is so widespread among students and faculty alike. It is a myth (Schwarz et al., 1991). Studies show that students change answers from right to wrong about 20 percent of the time, but change them from wrong to right 58 percent of the time (Benjamin et al., 1984). Other work shows that 3 points are gained for every 1 lost by changing answers (Geiger, 1991).

APPENDIX C

Electronic Communication

Receiving LVC Email

I regularly send messages via Blackboard to your LVC email account to notify you of schedule changes, grade postings, class cancellations, etc. You are **REQUIRED** to be able to receive emails I send to your LVC email account and to regularly check for such messages. Blackboard will only allow me to email your LVC account. If you prefer not to use your LVC email account, you are **REQUIRED** to follow the below directions to have your LVC email forwarded to an email account you regularly use:

- 1) Log into your LVC webmail account and click on “Options”
- 2) Go to “Mdaemon Settings”
- 3) Go to “My Account”
- 4) Set “Forwarding Mail” to “Yes” and set “Forwarding Address(es)” to the email address(es) that you regularly use.

Please note that the LVC Information Technology Services (ITS) team encourages you to use your LVC email address in lieu of other email accounts (e.g., hotmail, yahoo, aol) because LVC’s email is both SPAM and virus protected and has a larger email capacity than most other free services. Please contact ITS (x6072) if you have any questions about this or encounter any difficulties.

Downloading Slides From Blackboard

The following are directions (written for PC users but likely suitable for mac’ers) to download my PowerPoint slides from Blackboard.

- 1) After entering the master course page for our class on Blackboard, click on “Course Documents.”
- 2) Right click on the link to the PowerPoint document you’d like and select “Save Target As...”
- 3) Save the document to the destination of your choosing (e.g., personal folder, desktop, flash drive).
- 4) Once the document has downloaded, open it.
- 5) Pull down the File menu and select Print to open the print dialogue box.
- 6) Once the print dialogue box is open, go to “Print What” and select “Handouts.”
- 7) Put a “check” in the following boxes:
 - a. “Pure black and white”
 - b. “Scale to fit paper”
 - c. “Frame slides”
- 8) Click “OK”

Your printer should now print “handouts” of my PowerPoint presentation in which each printed page has six slides on it. The slides will be framed and will be in black and white. If you correctly follow these instructions on PCs that have PowerPoint installed on them you should not encounter any problems. You may or may not encounter problems if you implement these instructions on macs, or computers that don’t have PowerPoint installed on them. If you have a mac or don’t have PowerPoint on your PC, follow these directions on a computer lab PC that has PowerPoint on it. Students who still encounter difficulties should contact ITS (x6072).

FYI, penultimate (if not final) drafts of my PowerPoint presentations for each class will *usually* be posted the night before each class.