Appendix Materials for a Connexions Collection used as a College Course

By:

Kenneth Leroy Busbee

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Online:
< http://cnx.org/content/col10676/1.4/ >

C O N N E X I O N S

Rice University, Houston, Texas

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For copyright and attribution information for the modules contained in this collection, see p. 17.

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Chapter 1

Preface[1]

1.1 About this Collection

1.1.1 Appendix Materials for a Connexions Collection used as a College Course

Appendix Materials for a Connexions Collection used as a College Course is written by Kenneth Leroy Busbee, a faculty member at Houston Community College in Houston, Texas. The materials used in this collection were developed by the author for publication within the Connexions environment for the support of open courseware.

1.1.2 Collection Contents

The collection contents were initially written in support of a computer science course taught via distance education. However, they are sufficiently universal to be valuable to all students who use computers within any college course. This includes students taking non-computer science courses and any students in a course using a learning management system (like Blackboard). Additionally, the modules dealing with "study habits" are valuable to all students in all college courses. The collection consists for four modules:

- Show Hide File Extensions
- Academic or Scholastic Dishonesty
- Successful Study Habits
- Study Habits that Build the Brain

An Internet link to either the entire collection or to individual modules is an easy way for any professor to make this material available to their students. Counseling departments may also refer students that need help with their "study habits" to the materials.

1.2 About Connexions

1.2.1 Connexions Modular Content

Connexions http://cnx.org[2] is an online, **open access** educational resource dedicated to providing high quality learning materials free online, free in printable PDF format, and at low cost in bound volumes through print-on-demand publishing. This collection is one of many collections available to Connexions users. Each **collection** is composed of a number of re-usable learning modules written in the Connexions XML markup language. Each module may also be re-used (or 're-purposed') as part of other collections and may be used outside of Connexions.

[1] This content is available online at <http://cnx.org/content/m20492/1.5/>.
[2] http://cnx.org/

1.2.2 Re-use and Customization

The Creative Commons (CC) Attribution license[3] applies to all Connexions modules. Under this license, any **Connexions module** may be used or modified for any purpose as long as proper attribution to the original author(s) is maintained. Connexions' authoring tools make re-use (or re-purposing) easy. Therefore, instructors anywhere are permitted to create customized versions of this textbook by editing modules, deleting unneeded modules, and adding their own supplementary modules. Connexions' authoring tools keep track of these changes and maintain the CC license's required attribution to the original authors. This process creates a new collection that can be viewed online, downloaded as a single PDF file, or ordered in any quantity by instructors and students as a low-cost printed textbook.

1.2.3 Read the book online, print the PDF, or buy a copy of the book.

To browse this collection online, visit the collection home page. You will then have three options.

1. You may view the collection modules on-line by clicking on the "Start ≫" link, which takes you to the first module in the collection. You can then navigate to the next module using "NEXT ≫" and through the subsequent modules by using the "≪ PREVIOUS | NEXT ≫" button that is towards the upper right to move forward and backward in the collection. You can jump to any module in the collection by clicking on that module's title in the "TABLE OF CONTENTS" box on the left side of the window. If these contents are hidden, make them visible by clicking on the small triangle to the right of the "TABLE OF CONTENTS". Chapters also have a small triangle to show or hide contents.
2. You may obtain a PDF of the entire textbook to print or view offline by clicking on the "Download PDF" link in the "Content Actions" box.
3. You may order a bound copy of the collection (for a reasonable printing and shipping fee) by clicking on the "Order printed copy" button.

[3] http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/

Chapter 2

Show Hide File Extensions[1]

By default, file extensions for known file types are hidden in Windows operating systems. However, you can change this setting so that file extensions are shown for all file types. Being able to see file extensions can be very helpful for students taking computer courses because those course instructions often refer to file extensions.

All Windows operating systems navigate you to the "Folder Options" menu, then have you select the "View" tab. Indeed the box is identical in Windows XP, Windows Vista and Windows 7.

[1] This content is available online at <http://cnx.org/content/m18100/1.6/>.

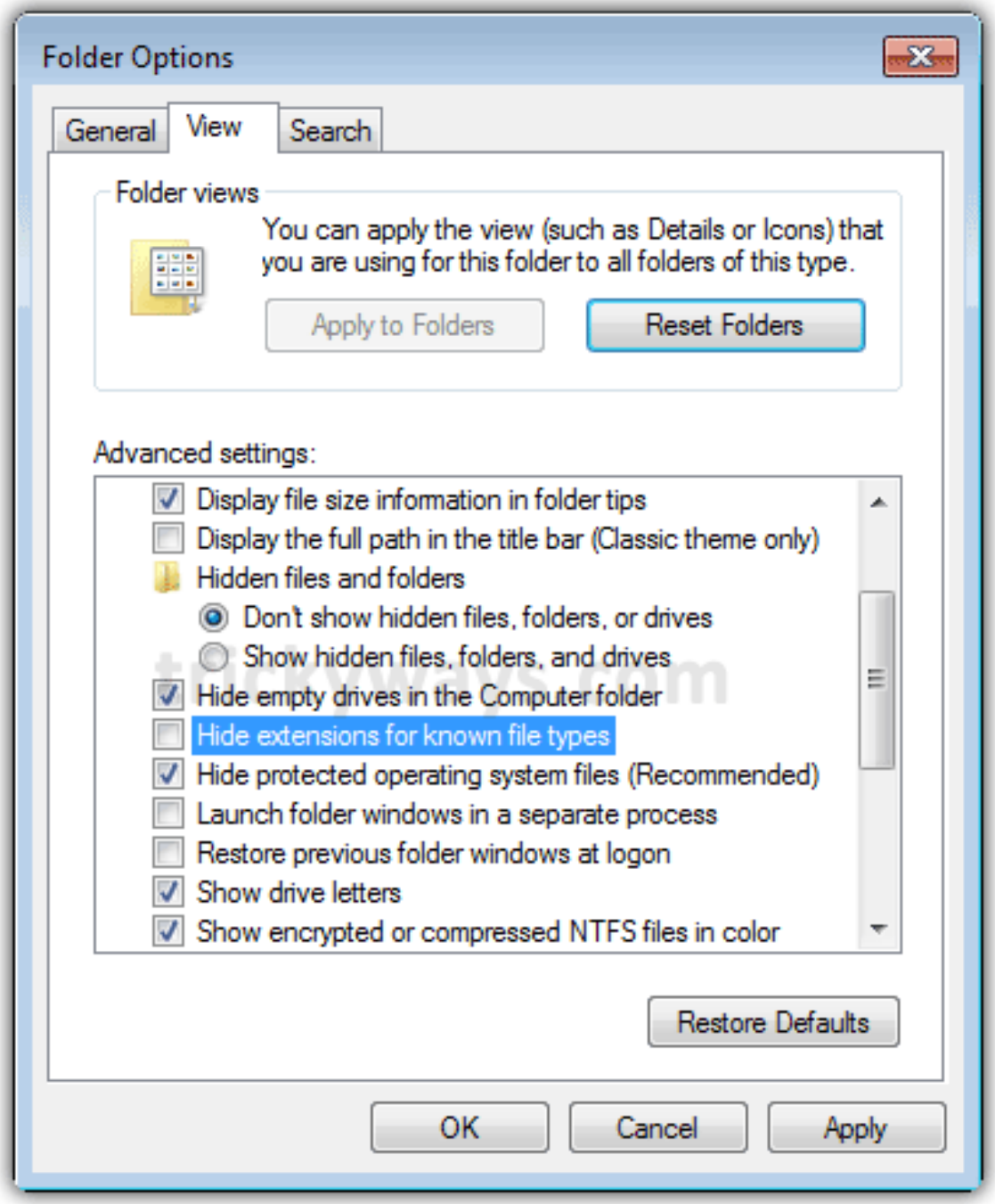

Figure 2.1

The check in the box acts like a toggle switch. With a check present, it will hide known file types. Without the check present, it will show all file types. Click on the box to make the check appear [hide file

extensions] or disappear [show file extensions] and then select "OK".

Instructions for navigating to the "Folder Options" for various Windows operating systems along with an Internet link for additional help are provided below.

2.1 Windows XP

With the Windows Explorer open, slect the "Tools" tab and then "Folder Options".

Link for additional help: http://www.fileinfo.net/help/windows-show-extensions.html[2] or http://dotwhat.net/page/displayextensions/[3]

2.2 Windows Vista

Select the "Start" button, then "Control Panel", then "Appearance and Personalization" and then "Folder Options".

Link for additional help: http://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows-vista/Show-or-hide-file-name-extensions[4]

2.3 Windows 7

Select the "Start" button, then "Control Panel" and then "Folder Options".

Link for additional help: http://maximumpcguides.com/windows-7/hide-file-extensions/[5]

[2] http://www.fileinfo.net/help/windows-show-extensions.html
[3] http://dotwhat.net/page/displayextensions/
[4] http://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows-vista/Show-or-hide-file-name-extensions
[5] http://maximumpcguides.com/windows-7/hide-file-extensions/

Chapter 3

Academic or Scholastic Dishonesty[1]

3.1 Introduction

The relationship between faculty and students has always been one of open and honest communication. The faculty member carries the responsibility of presenting course materials via reading assignments, lectures, labs, etc. The student is to learn and understand these materials. Additionally, the faculty members employ various methods to assess the student's mastery of the course materials. Frequently this is done via quizzes, tests, writing assignments, the completion of lab materials, etc. Academic dishonesty (sometimes called "Scholastic Dishonesty") is the violation of that trust.

Cheating on quizzes and tests as well as plagiarism is usually well understood by students before arriving at the collegiate level of education. Most colleges include adequate explanation in their student handbook explaining well what constitutes cheating on exams and plagiarism. Academic dishonesty often carries some stiff penalties. Usually, the student receives the grade of "F" from the professor in the course in which he is enrolled. The student might be expelled from all of their classes for which they are currently enrolled ("F" in all of your classes) and expelled from the institution (may not register for classes in the future). Sounds harsh, but it is a violation of the **bond of trust** between the student and the educational institution.

3.2 Collusion

Another category of academic dishonesty is collusion which is the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work (including lab assignments) offered for credit (counting towards your grade calculation). To better understand collusion, students need to realize that as part of the learning and evaluation of that learning, many professors use group projects; a directed or authorized collaboration. Often students are encouraged to form study groups to help discuss the course materials thus improving the learning process. These authorized and sometimes directed activities are not collusion.

The following discussion is to help the student understand collusion (unauthorized collaboration) with specific reference to courses that use computers. This is not an all inclusive list, but will cover the common situations that faculty have encountered over the years. Unless your specific professor informs you differently, you are to assume that the following items discussed are collusion.

3.3 Type it Yourself

Lab assignments are to be your own personal typing efforts. That is you are to type them or make the modifications yourself to the files (documents, spreadsheets, databases, programming source code, etc.) If your course is a programming subject, you are to run the source code file on your compiler, making corrections

[1] This content is available online at <http://cnx.org/content/m18096/1.11/>.

as need to complete the lab assignment. If the directions for an assignment include starting a new file then don't use an existing file and modify it to complete the assignment. **Unless specifically authorized by your professor, students should not complete computerized course work as a team or group and then share the final completed product.**

Students have said that they worked as a team or group and that all participated and all learned the materials. Don't try this excuse because professors don't buy it. Here is the problem: Part of the learning process is in you doing it yourself. Example: I ask two students to make me some pancakes for breakfast; I expect two individually prepared plates of pancakes (one from each of them) for my breakfast. The professor really does not want to eat two plates of pancakes (or 50 to 100 plates of pancakes, depending on how many students they are teaching), but part of your directed learning activity for the course is to demonstrate that you can make pancakes (not watch someone else make pancakes or participate as a group to make pancakes).

3.4 Control Access to Your Files

Controlling the files you create (or are directed to modify) means that others will not have access to copy your work. In other words, don't share your files.

Students have said that they shared the file so they the other student could see how the completed assignment should look. Don't try this excuse because professors don't buy it. Here is the problem: When you share the file you share your typing efforts (or your original work and your efforts to create that original work). Back to our pancake example: "I only gave the other student a plate of completed pancakes, so he could see what the end product should be." All the other student does is add some blue berries and whip cream. If a student makes minor modifications to your work (changes the spots where his name is at) and turns it in as his work – you will be included in the charge of academic dishonesty. **Unless specifically authorized by your professor, don't share any files that you create or modify with another student – ever, not now and not in the future.**

Here are two suggestions for controlling access to your files:

When using a course delivery software product or learning system, such as BlackBorad Vista, **don't give another person your password**. With the password, they will have access to your submitted assignments including the files that you created.

Don't leave your files on a machine where others may have access to them. If multiple students are using or have access to the same machine (often happens with students living in the same household – husband/wife, siblings or roommates) or in an on-campus course where many students will have access to the machine – **store your files on a flash drive**. Physically control who gets access to your flash drive.

3.5 Ask for a Clarification of the Collaboration

If you have any question about an activity that might be construed as unauthorized collaboration, ask your professor. They will provide clarification and direction to you about the activity.

Students have said that they did not understand or think that it was unauthorized collaboration. Don't try this excuse because professors don't buy it. Here is the problem: We can't, and won't list every minor way in which students can collude. **The burden is for you to ask for any clarification for the specific course from your professor.** Don't assume that what another instructor allowed in another course will be allowed by this professor in this course.

3.6 Detecting Academic Dishonesty

Professors weren't born yesterday. The faculty members of most institutions have individually years and collectively thousands of years at understanding academic dishonesty. Cheating on tests, plagiarism and collusion are not new to us. We share our expertise with each other at detecting academic dishonesty.

Additionally, the years of technical computer experience of professors who teach using computers in lab settings is often astounding.

Students have said that they did not think they could be detected or that academic dishonesty could not be proved. Don't try this approach because professors believe that they are slightly smarter. Actually, we know that we are a lot smarter. It amazes us that student don't realize that professors are a formidable force. **Don't gamble that you can beat us at the "Academic Dishonesty Game".** Please don't take this as a challenge and use it as an excuse to see if you can be academically dishonest and not get caught. We are warning you, not challenging you.

3.7 Serious Consequences

The consequences will vary from instructor to instructor and from institution to institution. They range from a simple slap on the hand (don't do it again) to complete explusion from the institution (expelled from all of your courses). Because the **bond of trust** is broken, many instructors will simply expel you from the course you are taking. As an example: Within the BCIS1405 course at Houston Community College, we expelled 8 students (along with giving them the grade of "F") from Distance Educations sections during the Spring 2008 term for Academic Dishonesty.

Be ready for what ever the consequences your instructor will deliver if you are dishonest.

3.8 Summary

- The ethics of academic honesty; there is a bond of trust that whatever the student does in relationship to the evaluation process are their own work and efforts.
- Collusion is the unauthorized collaboration of students on work submitted for evaluation.
- First directive: Type if yourself
- Second directive: Don't share your files
- Seek clarification from your professor if you have any doubt that the collaborative activity might be considered collusion.
- Professors are very capable at detecting academic dishonesty.
- There are usually consequences to your dishonest behavior.

Chapter 4

Successful Learning Skills[1]

4.1 Realize the Time Commitment

College computer courses often are listed in the catalog of courses with both lecture and lab hours. But unlike the natural and biological sciences (chemistry, physics and biology) that must meet in a specific lab room designed for those courses, students can usually complete their lab portions at a variety of locations (the college's computer lab, home, work, public library, friend's house, etc.).

The normal rule of thumb is 1 to 1.5 hours out of class studying for every hour in class and for computer courses this normally means both the lecture and lab hours. Students with learning disabilities or those whose primary language is not English will want to plan for more study time and should use a larger ratio. Thus, you should calculate the weekly hours of commitment needed for a course depending on your circumstances. Example:

If a student is taking a 4 credit hour computer course that the college catalog says contains a combination of 6 hours (adding your lecture and lab hours) during a regular 16 week semester; the weekly classroom and study time for that course would be 12 to 15 hours a week.

But many students take courses at a faster pace by either taking a course between semesters in a very concentrated mode, starting a course after the regular start of a semester or during the summer. To calculate the weekly study time needed you will need to calculate the total regular semester instructional time and divide by the number of weeks in the faster pace delivery. Example:

Our 4 credit hour course is to be taken during a summer term that has 9 weeks of instruction time. The total regular semester time would be 15 times the normal semester commitment (180 to 225 hours). Dividing it by 9 would mean 20 to 25 hours per week.

4.2 Understand Your Capacity to Concentrate

You cannot expect to spend long periods of time working on computer course materials. After 3 to 4 hours of working on course materials, your ability to learn drops significantly (and for most to near zero). This problem is compounded by the nature of the material which is cumulative in nature. This means that you must understand item a before you try to learn item b. All of the math and sciences courses of study are of this nature.

4.3 Plan Regular Study Times

The combination of the time commitment and your ability to concentrate leads to the conclusion that you cannot cram your study time into a week-end of concentrated study. You must break up your study time

[1] This content is available online at <http://cnx.org/content/m18101/1.10/>.

into 3 to 4 hour study periods doing only one study period per day. You must establish a regular routine for each week. Students taking a regular semester course on-campus will count their class (lecture and lab) time and plan 2 to 3 additional study periods.

If taking a course via distance education, students need to plan for all of the course time, thus during a regular semester term, our 4 credit hour course example would require 3 to 4 study periods with 3 to 4 hours for each study period per week. If taking the course at **faster pace** (9 week summer term) you will need to schedule more study times. This may mean a **3 to 4 hour study period daily for 6 days a week** (with only one day off as a day of rest).

You need to stay on top of a course to successfully complete it. Pacing yourself with multiple study times allows for effective learning. Students who procrastinate until close to an exam and then try cramming through course materials are rarely "A" students.

4.4 Learning Requires Variety and Repetition

Variety comes in many forms and includes lecture, lab assignments, studying textbooks, multi-media materials, quizzes, writing a research papers, learning activities such as group discussions, crossword puzzles, flash cards, etc. This variety actually helps our brain to understand and build memory. In addition to variety, repetition (exposure over multiple study periods) is essential for our brains to be able to learn and recall the course materials. Again, this understanding and recall are essential to courses that require cumulative learning (you must understand item a before you can learn item b).

Textbooks and professors break-up course materials into chapters or learning modules often with learning objectives first and review items at the end of each unit. Each chapter or module might have any of the above mentioned items. But doing things and study are different. You can't just show up to class and listen, you can't just read stuff, you need to study. Study requires a variety of activities. Ask yourself:

- Do you understand each learning objective?
- Can you explain or formulate an answer for each learning objective?
- If you did not understand the reading materials, did you re-read it?
- Do the review items (especially questions).
- Take lecture notes.
- Do the lecture notes or handouts give you a better understanding than the textbook?
- Often the problems or lab assignments are to be studied in conjunction with and reinforce the study materials. Have you tried to do and understand the problems or lab assignments?
- Are there any learning activities available and if yes, did you do them.
- Did you consider using 3x5 cards to study definitions and vocabulary?
- Did you review the learning objectives before taking any quizzes?
- If the quizzes are computerized, did you study your quiz results?
- After reviewing quiz results and re-study, did you retake the quiz again if available?

All of this requires time and effort on your part as the student in any course (distance education or on-campus). You need several study periods a week to learn the materials in any course. The purpose of a quiz is for you to self assess your understanding of the materials. If your learning is not complete, **change or modify your learning habits**.

4.5 Interact with the Other Students

In a normal classroom students interact with each other. They often form study groups with other students and meet regularly to help each other study materials. These interactions in most cases are essential to the learning process. If your only interaction is by private conversation or private email with the instructor, you are not fully participating in the course. For distance education students, most learning systems (such as Blackboard Vista) provide several tools to create this interaction. They typically include announcements, discussion list, email and chat tools.

4.6 Don't Procrastinate and Don't Get Behind

What should you do if you get behind? Plan **regular study periods.** The lack of regular study periods is most likely the reason for why you got behind. Plan when you will do **extra study periods** in order to catch up.

4.7 Attend Class and Take Notes

Taking lecture notes and being able to review those note later when you are studying provides variety that is needed to learn material. Just writing the notes down more actively engages the brain, because you are listening and writing. But you need to arrange with at least two fellow classmates that you will all take notes and share notes with each other if absent. In addition to course materials, other administrative matters are discussed in class (such as the announcement of exam date change).

If you are taking a distance education course, you need to regularly enter the learning management system (such as Blackboard Vista) and review the announcements, discussion list postings and read (and answer if appropriate) email. Most distance education professors assume that anything he has communicated via these tools will have been read by the student within 3 days. In short this means you are responsible for having read the items and completing any action requested.

Chapter 5

Study Habits that Build the Brain[1]

5.1 Introduction

During the spring of 2008 the author, Kenneth Leroy Busbee, did some research with students taking a computer programming fundamentals course to determine if using 3x5 cards would improve student performance on exams. In short, it did! This was not a surprise, but it became obvious that most of us (faculty at all levels of education as well as students) have little understanding of how are brain builds understanding and long term memory.

Attached are several PowerPoint presentations that have been save in an Adobe PDF format. Please spend a few minutes reviewing the information provided. Hopefully it will help students to better learn the subjects they are studying.

5.2 Main Presentation

Link to: Study Habits that Build the Brain[2]

5.3 Specific Topics

Link to: Reading the Textbook[3]

Link to: Taking Lecture Notes[4]

Link to: Using 3x5 Cards[5]

Link to: Using the Flash Card Activity[6]

[1] This content is available online at <http://cnx.org/content/m19977/1.5/>.

[2] See the file at <http://cnx.org/content/m19977/latest/Study_Habits_that_Build_the_Brain.pdf>

[3] See the file at <http://cnx.org/content/m19977/latest/Reading_the_Textbook.pdf>

[4] See the file at <http://cnx.org/content/m19977/latest/Taking_Lecture_Notes.pdf>

[5] See the file at <http://cnx.org/content/m19977/latest/Using_3x5_Cards.pdf>

[6] See the file at <http://cnx.org/content/m19977/latest/Using_the_Flash_Card_Activity.pdf>

Index of Keywords and Terms

Keywords are listed by the section with that keyword (page numbers are in parentheses). Keywords do not necessarily appear in the text of the page. They are merely associated with that section. *Ex.* apples, § 1.1 (1) **Terms** are referenced by the page they appear on. *Ex.* apples, 1

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Appendix Materials for a Connexions Collection used as a College Course
The items in this collection were developed by the author for the support of open courseware. Some modules are particularly useful for students taking courses that use computers and others could be used for all courses.

About Connexions
Since 1999, Connexions has been pioneering a global system where anyone can create course materials and make them fully accessible and easily reusable free of charge. We are a Web-based authoring, teaching and learning environment open to anyone interested in education, including students, teachers, professors and lifelong learners. We connect ideas and facilitate educational communities.

Connexions's modular, interactive courses are in use worldwide by universities, community colleges, K-12 schools, distance learners, and lifelong learners. Connexions materials are in many languages, including English, Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, Italian, Vietnamese, French, Portuguese, and Thai. Connexions is part of an exciting new information distribution system that allows for **Print on Demand Books**. Connexions has partnered with innovative on-demand publisher QOOP to accelerate the delivery of printed course materials and textbooks into classrooms worldwide at lower prices than traditional academic publishers.