March 31, 2013

This letter is intended to respond to the reviewer comments cited in response to the manuscript entitled by “On the Effect of Learning Style on Scholastic Achievement”.

1. The first concern was the following: “It’s unclear how this paper presents a new and significant contribution to the existing literature.” Our response is that the study provides empirical evidence that there is a significant interaction between learning style and grade point average (GPA) among undergraduate students with students with the Converger learning style having the greatest GPA. The study provides support for the view that instructional methods used in undergraduate programs in the liberal arts and sciences favor students with the Converger learning style. This startling finding is discussed on pages 9-11 of the manuscript. From a consideration of learning styles, one would think that undergraduate programs would not favor one learning style over others, but this is clearly not the case. There were other findings from the study, but the one heretofore-cited finding regarding the interaction of learning style and undergraduate GPA is the main outcome.
2. A second concern is the following: “Clarify why sociology students were chosen to be participants and what the implications are given that population.” Our response is that we wanted to study undergraduate students enrolled in courses in a social science. We are delighted to have access to students enrolled in sociology courses, because sociology is generally viewed as a traditional social science with a venerable history and tradition. Many students in the liberal arts and sciences enroll in sociology courses; thus, students enrolled in sociology courses may likely be representative of undergraduate students in the liberal arts and sciences. One implication is that the findings of our study may be generalizable to undergraduate students throughout the liberal arts and sciences, even though we did not obtain our participants by random sampling a sample of students from the entire population of undergraduate students at the large public research university from which our participants came. However, we did draw our participants from three randomly selected classes in sociology, as indicated on page 5 of the manuscript. Thus randomization did play a part in the selection of participants for the study. Subsequent research would, of course, be needed to determine how generalizable our findings are to the entire population of undergraduate students in the liberal arts and sciences.
3. Another concern was the following: “Address contradictions in terminology (cognitive styles and learning styles, learning and cognition).” In response, we removed all references to “cognitive styles” and “cognition” throughout the text of the manuscript, as we used the expressions “learning styles” and “learning” periodically and exclusively throughout the manuscript.
4. A fourth concern was the following: “Address contradictory information presented about the availability of research on the relationship between learning styles and achievement.” We addressed that concern by markedly expanding the research literature that we discussed in the paper that considers the relationships among learning styles, instructional methods, and achievement. For example, we added the review article by Pashler, et al. (2008).
5. A fifth concern was the following: “Expand the discussion of the finding that the dominant learning style of sociology student is Assimilator, and the highest performing group is Converger.” In response, we expanded the discussion of that finding on pages 8-11.
6. A sixth concern was the following: “Include information on reliability/validity of the Kolb inventory.” In response, we expanded our coverage of the reliability and validity of the Kolb inventory on pages 5-6 of the revised manuscript.
7. A seventh concern was the following: “Consider a more appropriate statistical analysis for the nominal variables presented in this paper, such as a Chi square. “ In response, we included a Chi-square analysis of the data that we discussed on page 9 of the revised manuscript. We believe that the other statistical analyses that we presented in the manuscript were appropriate for the data.
8. The eighth concern was the following: “Include existing research on gender and learning style.” In response, we have expanded our coverage of research literature on gender and learning style on pages 5 and 10-11.

In summary, we contend that we have dutifully addressed all of the concerns of the reviewers of our original manuscript through a program of changes, modifications, and additions resulting in the attached revised manuscript. We also contend that the revised manuscript is a clearer, stronger, and better manuscript than the original version. All eight reviewer comments and our responses to them have contributed substantially to the revised manuscript. We are grateful for the fine reviewer comments provided us regarding our original manuscript.