Learning Styles

• Different people learn differently
• Various ways to categorize learning styles
  – Visual
  – Auditory
  – Read/Write
  – Kinesthetic/Tactile
• Most people have multiple styles
Visual Learners

• Learn by seeing
• Like pictures, diagrams, body language
• Appreciate use of color, highlighting
Auditory Learners

• Learn by listening
• Like lectures, discussions
• Attuned to oral queues (tone of voice, pitch, speed)
• Can benefit from reading aloud, using a tape recorder, explaining ideas to others
Read/Write Learners

• Learn by reading and writing
• Like to read words or numbers rather than be told or see diagrams
• Like lists, essays, dictionaries, glossaries, manuals
• Most successful academics are read/write learners; most students are not!
Kinesthetic Learners

• Learn by doing, moving, touching

• Like hands-on approach and real-world examples: labs, case studies, field trips

• May need breaks during lecture

• May find chewing gum, listening to music helpful while studying
Style != Ability

• Non read/write learners may have excellent reading/writing skills

• Non-visual learners may enjoy visual experiences and activities
Teach me my most difficult concepts in my preferred style
Let me explore my easiest concepts in a different style
Just don’t teach me all the time in your preferred style
and think I’m not capable of learning.

Virleen Carlson,
Center for Teaching and Learning
Cornell University