

Pathways Lesson

Career Research Project & Essay

(Original sources: Carolyn Darin & Nyla Jolly Dalferes, University 100, Freshman Seminar)

OBJECTIVE:

As a result of this lesson, students will integrate knowledge of self with research on the world of work to make initial decisions and plans for majors and occupational options using multiple resources.



CAREER PREPARATION LEARNING RESULTS MET OR PARTIALLY MET:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the changing nature of work and educational requirements.
- Use a career planning process that includes self-assessment, personal development, and planning as a way to gain initial entry into the workplace.

SKILLS ENHANCED: Self-evaluation, research, analysis, planning, and organization.

Materials: Pathways website. www.csun.edu/pathways - All 4 Modules: Discover Yourself, Research Academic Programs, Explore Occupations, and Plan Your Future

Essay Prompt:

This essay is your culminating assignment for this course. For this assignment, you are to write a comprehensive essay based upon the choices you are making about majors and career fields. *It should reflect the discussions, self-discovery exercises, campus resources, career resources, and reflective activities you have completed throughout the course.*

Hints for success:

- To clarify Interests, Skills and Values, complete the Discover Yourself Activities in Pathways.
- For job and major descriptions, consider checking out: the Research Academic programs and Explore Occupations modules of Pathways
 - *SUNlink* for job descriptions and names of companies
 - The Occupational Outlook Handbook put out by the Bureau of Labor Statistics <http://www.bls.gov/oco/>
 - The Major Monographs at <http://www.csun.edu/career/students/explore.htm> (on the Career Center website)
 - CSUN's Catalog
- For Graduate school insights, check out the Plan Your Future module of Pathways.

Use the following prompts to guide your analysis:

1. What is your ideal job?
 - Provide a detailed description of your ideal job (include the types of things you would be responsible for and any other details important to you)
 - State the specific job title of an occupation of interest to you.
 - What type of company would you be interested in working for?
 - i. Provide the name of at least one company/organization.
 - ii. Where is the ideal location in the country/world to work for this company?
2. What major/s are you considering?
 - Name 3 CSUN majors that would be interesting for you to pursue.
 - Which one is your top interest area right now?
 - Provide a description of that major.
 - Describe what you will learn by completing this major.
 - What will you learn in this major that will be helpful for the occupation you are considering?
 - Speak about any GE course or elective that either excites or worries you about this major.
 - Are internships/fieldwork/research courses required for this major? How do you feel about that?
3. Conduct an **Informational Interview** with someone in the occupation you selected, or with an academic advisor in one of the majors you are considering, and incorporate the information gained from the interview into your essay. Use your personal and CSUN resources to find someone to interview (i.e., ask classmates, friends, family members, work peers, etc.). A sample informational interview sheet is available in the Real World Experience section of Pathways.. You should prepare at least 5 questions for your interview, but you may ask

additional questions as well if you'd like. You should ask any questions that are important to you – majors to study for the field, time with family, salary range, independence, etc. Ask for that person's business card or contact information and be sure to follow up with a thank you note or card to whomever you interview. (Be sure to dress appropriately and be on time for your appointment.)

4. Incorporate your Career Assessment results into your analysis.
 - Consider how the interests, values, skills, personality traits, and strengths that you possess will fit this job.
5. Is graduate study and/or additional training required for your chosen occupation? If so, explain what type and how you can increase your chances of being accepted to graduate school.
6. Provide a description of at least one activity (such as volunteer work, survival job, internship, etc) not related to school coursework that could help you to get your ideal job.
7. You might want to include in **your introduction** your families' career choices or circumstances that influenced you in your choice of career fields.
8. **Your conclusion** should sum up and analyze what you have learned from your job and major research and what you plan to do with this information. For instance, you might find that you are now even more interested in your career field and major; you might discover that you want to change your mind about your major or career; or you might discover that you need to complete more research.

Format:

- ✓ Typed, double-spaced, with 12 pt. Times New Roman font, and 1-inch margins.
- ✓ contain an introduction, a body, and a conclusion.
- ✓ 4-5 pages in length
- ✓ Resources cited in MLA format

For more information, contact:

Nyla Jolly Dalferes, CSUN Career Center, 818-677-3079, nyla.dalferes@csun.edu