

THREE RIVERS COMMUNITY COLLEGE
COU 130, CAREER CHOICES, SPRING, 2011
MWF 9:00 – 9:50 AM, D228

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COU*130: Career Choices: Course Overview/Course Objectives

This course provides a critical exploration of the skills and information needed by students to be effective in the selection of academic plans of study and subsequent careers by increasing understanding of self. This course helps students clarify career goals through self-exploration by identifying interests, skills, and values using standardized career assessments, interpersonal discussion, group activities, personal reflection and career research.

Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

- ❖ Describe the context for career-related decisions are made in the 21st century
- ❖ Understand a decision-making model that can be used again and again throughout life
- ❖ Describe personal characteristics identified through theory; results of inventories of interests, skills, and values; and class activities
- ❖ Identify a group of occupations that meet personal characteristics and goals
- ❖ Identify and select education/training needed to enter one or more careers
- ❖ Present skills and documents that assist in the job-search process

Required Text: Harris-Bowlsbey, JoAnn, Ed.D., (2004). Take Hold of Your Future (online book)

- Standardized assessments will be provided
- Supporting Web Site: www.kuderjourney.com

Course Policies:

CLASS ATTENDANCE: Attendance and participation are critical to your success in this course. Your learning in this experience-oriented class requires your involvement. It is expected that students will attend every session. Twenty percent of your final grade is based upon your in-class participation in exercises and activities.

MAKE-UP WORK: All assignments must be turned in at the beginning of the class in which they are due. Late papers and assignments lose a half grade immediately and additional half grades for each subsequent class until they are turned in or the grade reaches an "F".

DROP/WITHDRAWAL POLICY: Students may drop the class up to and including Feb. 1 by obtaining a drop/add form from the Registrar's Office and returning it to the Registrar's Office. Students may also withdraw from the class up to and including May 7 in order to avoid getting a grade for the class.

CLASS CANCELLATION: On the rare occasions when class meetings must be cancelled, students will be informed through MyCommnet. For information on weather related closings, consult the College's webpage at www.trcc.commnet.edu . Local radio stations also make announcements.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM: Please be sure to read and understand TRCC's policies on cheating, plagiarism, and academic integrity. (See TRCC student handbook, page 19). Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and will result in an automatic failing (F) grade for the course.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: If you have special learning needs, such as an intellectual, learning, psychological or physical disability which might impede your progress in the class, please see me or contact the Counseling and Advising Center in Room A119, 860-383-5217.

Evaluation and Grading:

Assessments and reports	20%
Self-Concept paper	10%
Class Participation	20%
Journal assignments (3)	15%
Major/Career Research Paper	20%
Final presentation	15%
Total	100%

Grading: Final grades will be awarded for the following levels of performance

A	95 - 100%
A-	90 - 94%
B+	86 - 89%
B	83 - 85%,
B-	80 - 82%
C+	76 - 79%
C	73 - 75%,
C-	70 - 72%
D+	66 - 69%
D	63 - 65%,
D-	60 - 62%
F	59% and below

1. Class participation (20%)

Classroom discussion and exercises are an extremely valuable component of this course. It is expected that you will come to class having read the assigned materials, have completed assignments, and that you will have thoughtful questions or comments about the readings.

Participation will be graded as follows:

A = helpful, honest, and thought-provoking comments to and with students;
B = helpful comments to and with students in discussions;
C = minimally helpful in class discussions;
D = unhelpful comments in class;
F = not engaged in class in any apparent way.

2. Weekly Journal (15%). Submitted: 2/27, 4/9, and 5/7

Complete a one to two page journal each week that integrates knowledge gained from the readings, class lectures, exercises and discussions. It is essential to incorporate key concepts addressed in the readings and class activities. **Citing specific sections of the readings is very useful.** Overall, the journal assignment is an opportunity to reflect on the subject matter addressed and apply it to your own life. The assignment is meant to be free flowing and include your analysis and reflection. However it is not simply a personal journal without references to class material.

Some key questions to consider might include:

- What was the major theme of this week's lessons and activities?
- What did you learn that was new or surprising?
- What assumptions were challenged and what does mean to you?
- How have readings clarified, challenged, or changed your perspectives?

3. Self-Concept paper. (10%)

A 3-to-5-page paper titled "My Self-Concept." The content of the paper should include the following:

- A description of your self-concept – the view you have of yourself.
- A detailed description, beginning with your earliest memories, of how you believe your self-concept was formed, including significant people and events in your life.
- A description of how you believe your self-concept will influence your occupational choice. List the occupations (your early daydream occupations and your present more realistic ones) that you believe will be good "fits" for you.

4. Kuder standardized instruments (20%)

These assessments will provide critical information to you and are essential for successfully completing the class. They are web-based surveys designed to be completed outside of class. You will receive any information you need to complete the assessments. Your reflection papers will be critical to your grade and should demonstrate an understanding of what the assessments report and how that impacts your choices now and in the future. Discussing and clarifying your interests, skills and work values is an important part of the class. We will use a variety of assignments – written, oral, group, and individual – to explore results.

5. Education/Career research paper (20%)

This is an individual assignment that requires research into two careers and two educational areas or majors that interest you. The deliverables are a paper of a

minimum of five pages that describes your research and a PowerPoint presentation of a minimum of five minutes that covers your project.

Extra credit awarded if you interview a professional in one of the areas.

6. Final report (15%)

This assignment will be an oral assessment of your understanding of the material and concepts covered in the class. It will be comprehensive, that is, it will include all of the topics covered in the semester. Deliver a 5-6 minute PowerPoint presentation and incorporate pictures and/or video. The presentation should include a one-page handout for the class highlighting key areas of research.

The presentation should also include information on:

- Why the career field was chosen
- What was learned from the research
- The impact of this information relative to career and educational choices
- Follow up plans or actions in response to insights

In light of the cost of printing you may elect to single space rather than double space your papers. If single-spaced, the page length guidelines above may be cut in half.

Weekly Assignments:

January 19th Instructor, Student and Course introductions

Student introductions:

- Give your name.
- State the title of one occupation of your daydreams.
- Indicate the reason(s) you have daydreamed about this occupation.
- State what you expect to get from the course.

Week of January 23rd [Introduction to the Course and to Career Planning](#)

Homework for the week:

Read Chapter 1 of the textbook.

Write a short paper describing trends related to work tasks, work settings, work tools, and workers in the 21st century, and what these trends might mean for your personal career planning. Refer to the Take Action page at the end of Chapter 1 in the textbook for further details on how to prepare your paper.

Week of January 30^h [Career Planning in the 21st Century](#)

Homework for the week:

Read Chapter 2 of the textbook.

Complete the Life-Career Rainbow Worksheet provided, and the Life Role Diary on pages 49-52 of the textbook.

Week of February 6th Personal Skills for the 21st Century

Homework for the week:

Read Chapter 3 of the textbook.

Week of February 13th Life Goals and Roles

Homework for the week:

Read Chapter 4 of the textbook.

Make a collage that describes who you are now. This collage can be made up of real pictures of you in different activities, of pictures from magazines, or be an original artistic creation. At least one picture should describe who you believe you are today, one how you think other people see you, and one that depicts who you would like to be in the future. You may be asked to describe your collage in the next class session.

Begin to work on a three to five page paper titled "My Self-Concept."

Week of February 20th Environment and Self

Homework for the week:

Read Chapter 5 of the textbook.

Complete the Career Archway Worksheet provided.

Submit 3-to-5-page paper titled "My Self-Concept."

**Week of February 27th The Career Decision-Making Process
(Journal Assignment Due)**

Homework for the week:

Read Chapter 6 of the textbook.

Take the *Kuder® Career Search with Person Match* (interest inventory) from the *Kuder® Journey* web site (www.kuderjourney.com). Print out your full score report and bring it to the next session.

Week of March 5th Take Assessments

Homework for the week:

Read Chapter 7 of the textbook.

Take *Kuder® Skills Assessment* and *Super's Work Values Inventory* revised in *Kuder Journey*. Print out your Composite Reports and bring them to the next session.

Complete the Examining Your Work Values Worksheet.

Week of March 12th Take Assessments, Cont'd

Homework for the week:

Read Chapter 8 of the textbook.

Week of March 19th – 25th Spring Break

Week of March 26th [Make a List of Occupations](#)

Homework for the week:

Read Chapter 9 of the textbook.

Complete the Job Characteristics Worksheet on page 149 of the textbook.

Week of April 2nd [Make a List of Occupations, Cont'd](#)

Homework for the week:

Read Chapters 10 and 11 of the textbook.

Complete the Decision-Making Grid on page 147 of the textbook.

Week of April 9th [Make a List of Majors and Consider Education](#) (Journal Assignment Due)

Homework for the week:

Read Chapter 12 of the textbook.

Talk to an academic advisor or department chair related to the major(s) you have tentatively selected. Be prepared to report what you have learned.

Week of April 16th [Develop Job Search Tools](#)

Homework for the week:

Read Chapter 13 of the textbook.

Using the Résumé section of *Kuder Journey*, prepare a chronological résumé, a functional résumé, and a cover letter to go with them. Bring copies to the next session.

Week of April 23rd [Getting a Job](#)

Homework for the week:

Read Chapter 14 of the textbook.

Complete the Transitions and Decision Making Worksheet provided.

Week of April 30th [Transitions](#)

There is no homework assignment following this session.

Final class reports.

Week of May 7th [Transitions](#) (Journal Assignment Due)

There is no homework assignment following this session.

Final class reports.

Week of May 14th

This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor at any time in the semester.