

**THREE RIVERS COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
COU 130, CAREER CHOICES, FALL, 2012  
MWF 9:00 – 9:50 AM, E221**

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

This course provides a critical exploration of the skills, values, and information needed by students to be effective in the selection of academic plans of study and subsequent careers. It is designed to increase understanding of self by helping students clarify career goals through self-exploration of 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 in the 21<sup>st</sup> century
- ❖ Understand decision-making models and your preferences
- ❖ Describe personal characteristics identified through theory; career instruments; and class activities
- ❖ Identify a group of occupations that reflect individual 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](http://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 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 Sept. 10 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 Dec. 10 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](http://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). 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	25%
Self-Concept project (report and collage)	15%
Class Participation	20%
Homework assignments	15%
Career research and final presentation	25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

**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. Homework Assignments (15%).**

Throughout the course there will be a variety of homework assignments that require your reflection and review of content and learnings. You will need to integrate knowledge gained from the readings, class lectures, exercises and discussions. It is essential to incorporate key concepts addressed in the readings and class activities. Overall, the assignments are an opportunity to reflect on the subject matter addressed and apply it to your own life. The assignments are meant to be free flowing and include your analysis and reflection.

Some key questions to consider throughout the course 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 projects (15%)**

A self-concept collage includes images that reflect how you see yourself now and in the future. The first collage will include images of who you are now and how others impact your sense of self as well as how they see you. The second collage will include the same images but focus on who you want to become and how you see yourself in the future. Topics for both include: work, location, family, friends, home, activities, recreation, and anything you see being a part of your life as an adult.

The first collage will be followed up with a 3-to-5 page paper (DS) 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 (25%)**

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

### **5. Career research and final paper (25%)**

This is an individual assignment that integrates your learning and responses to the assessments as well as the research you do as follow up. It includes an interview with an individual working in your field of interest and your responses to what you learned. Descriptions of 'next steps' should be included and address education, work or volunteer experiences, and an understanding of any challenges you may face and ways to overcome them. You will only be required to interview one professional, but your paper should address alternative careers (at least one other) that you are considering. The deliverables are a paper of a minimum of three pages and a PowerPoint presentation that describes your research and conclusions.

The PowerPoint presentation following your meeting will include a demonstration of your understanding of the day-to-day reality of the career. A 2-3 minute PowerPoint presentation can incorporate pictures and/or video. The presentation should include a one-page handout for the class highlighting key areas of research.

The presentation should include information on:

- Why you choose the career field
- Education required, pay, training, and future employment expectations.
- How your interview influences your sense of the future relative to your career and educational choices
  - Your follow up plans or actions in response to insights – work experience, education
  - Challenges and ways to overcome them
  - An integration of the facts and what they mean to you

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### **Weekly Assignments:**

**Week 1: August 27<sup>th</sup>**

**Professional Day 8.31.12 – no classes**

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.

Syllabus Review

Homework: Complete Career Plans worksheet

Homework: Read Chapter 1 of the textbook.

## **Week 2: September 3**

**Labor Day 9.3.12 – no classes**

Review of Career Plans

Discussion: Be prepared to participate in a discussion on current trends related to work tasks, work settings, work tools, and workers in the 21st century, and what these trends mean to you and your personal career planning. Refer to the Take Action page at the end of Chapter 1 in the textbook for further details.

Chapter review - Maslow

Homework: Make a collage that describes who you are now: school, work, play, family, etc. This collage can be made up of real pictures of you in different activities or include pictures from magazines. It can also be an original artistic creation. At least one picture should describe who you believe you are today, one of how you think other people see you, and one that depicts who you would like to be in the future. You will present your collage in the class.

Homework: Read Chapter 2 of the textbook.

## **Week 3: September 10**

Collage review and presentation

Homework: Complete the soft skills rating sheet and the soft skills action sheet.

Homework: Read chapter 3

## **Week 4: September 17**

Review Soft Skills assessments

Homework 1: Complete the Life-Career Rainbow Worksheet and the Life Role worksheet at end of chapter.

Homework: Read chapter 4

Homework: Three to five page paper titled "My Self-Concept."

Complete the Career Archway Worksheet provided

**Week 5: September 24**

Review career constructs  
Review Life Rainbow concepts  
Review "My Self-Concept."

Homework: Read Chapter 5  
Homework: Decision making sheet

**Week 6: October 1**

Review Decision making

Homework: Read Chapter 6

**Week 7: October 8**

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

Homework: Read Chapter 7

**Week 8: October 15**

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.

Homework: Read Chapter 8  
Homework: Complete the Examining Your Work Values Worksheet.

**Week 9: October 22**

Assessment reviews  
Homework: Read Chapter 9

**Week 10: October 22**

Assessment review and reports  
Homework: Read Chapter 10  
Complete the Job Characteristics Worksheet

**Week 11: October 29**

Homework: Read Chapter 11  
Complete the Decision-Making Grid

**Week 12: November 5**

Report out on top 2 career choices  
Homework: Read Chapter 12

**Week 13: November 12**

**Labor Day 11.12.12 – no classes**

Homework: Read Chapter 13.

Complete “elevator speech” and identify person to interview for career research project

**Week 14: November 19**

**Thanksgiving 11.22-25.12 – no classes**

Reports on career interview

Homework: Read Chapter 14

**Week 15: November 26**

Final class reports

Self-concept collage 2

**Week 16: December 3**

Final class reports

There is no homework assignment following this session.

**Week 17: December 10**

Final class reports

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