Career Exploration and Occupational Information on the Web

The purpose of this exercise is to assist you in your major and career exploration process by gathering some personal and career-related information using the internet. This exercise will assist you to,

1. Learn more about how your interests relate to majors and careers.
2. Relate occupational options with major choices.
3. Learn more about other career related resources on the internet.

You may use additional Internet resources to obtain information.

NOTE: In order to choose which NWCC majors represent your best fit, you will need to continue the exploration process beyond this web activity. Plan on meeting with an academic advisor to determine courses and classes once you have narrowed your choice.

Part 1: Relating Your Interest to Careers and Majors

Next is a description of six groups of people that will be attending a party. Each of these groups describes the six basic categories of occupational interest developed by John Holland. The people in these six groups all have similar interests. We will assume that they will socialize only with members of their same group. Of the six different groups, you are to decide which three groups you are more comfortable with at the party. Indicate your top three choices by putting 1-3 in the designated blanks.

___ Realistic: People who have athletic or mechanical abilities. These people like working with objects, machines, tools, plants, or animals, or to be outdoors. Some jobs include that of a carpenter, engineer, park ranger, professional athlete, mechanic, army officer, architect or builder, and machine operator. These people enjoy working with things.

___ Investigative: People who enjoy observing, learning, investigating, examining, taking a part or solving problems. Some jobs include that of a physician, mathematician, computer programmer, chemist, veterinarian, and lab technician. These people enjoy working with ideas and things.

___ Artistic: Inventive or artistic people who like to use their imagination or creativity working in unstructured situations. Some jobs include that of an artist, writer, commercial artist, interior decorator, and musician. These people enjoy working with ideas.

___ Social: People who enjoy working with people. Work includes understanding, helping, training, developing, informing, or curing other people. Some jobs include that of a teacher, counselor, social worker, and psychologist. These people enjoy working with people and information.
Enterprising: People who enjoy working with, influencing, persuading, and leading other people. Some jobs include that of a politician, marketing or business representative, and salesperson. These people enjoy working with people and ideas.

Conventional: People who enjoy working with information. These people possess general office management skills. They also have skills working with numbers and mathematics, carrying things out in detail, and following through on the instructions of others. Some jobs include that of an accountant, banker, secretary, and office manager. These people enjoy working with ideas and things.

Now that you have completed the Interest Assessment, the Self-exploration of your interests, skills, values and personality are a critical step in making realistic and satisfying decisions.

What was your Summary Code:

Realistic       Investigative       Artistic       Social       Enterprising       Conventional

How does this information about YOURSELF support or contrast with your past or current ideas about academic majors and careers?

Explore Majors and Degrees (http://career.utk.edu/students/holland.asp) to see programs of study that match your code. As you read the list of academic programs, you’ll notice that some will seem more appealing than others. For instance, you may consider a program to be appealing if it requires one of your aptitudes (e.g. math, science, persuasive skills, writing, etc) and it relates to an occupation you’re interested in, or generally seems like something you would enjoy studying.

List 3 of the majors that are unfamiliar to you and that merit further investigation.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

It is imperative that you collect information about each of the majors you regard as possibilities and consider the following questions:

✦ What would I enjoy about the course work required for these majors?
✦ What would I find difficult about the course work required for these majors?
✦ Do I enjoy the skills that these majors required?
✦ Is it possible to combine my interests in multiple disciplines?
✦ What occupations correspond to these majors?
✦ Would I enjoy these occupations?
✦ Am I considering any of these majors just to please others?
✦ What criteria do you need to meet in order to be accepted into your major?

Part II: Relating Careers to Majors: What can I do with a Major in?

You can explore occupations by majors or by getting information about a specific occupation you may have in mind. You may use both methods to do your research. Select one occupation you want to research further.

1. What can I do with a major in? (http://www.usm.edu/cs/students/majors/default.html) excellent site for exploring how one’s major relates to various occupational titles. Features a list of “further exploration” web sites for each major.
2. USA Jobs (http://www.usajobs.opm.gov/EI23.asp) Search by your major for a list of jobs, or pick a job and see which majors might fit that career. These lists aren’t exhaustive but might open your eyes about what you can do with your degree.

Getting Information about Occupations, visit:

- Occupational Outlook Handbook (http://www.bls.gov/oco/). This site describes what workers do on the job, the working conditions, the training and education needed, earning, and expected job prospects in a wide range of occupations. It is an on-line version of standard resources found in career services centers. Many of the sites listed above link to this site for their descriptions of occupations.

- O*Net (http://online.onetcenter.org/) Search for occupations based on your skills or simply explore different occupations based on different features.

Consider the following questions:
- What do workers typically do? (job responsibilities and tasks performed)
- In what type of environment do employees work? (i.e. office, outdoors, hospitals, etc)
- What type of academic preparation and/or training is required for this occupation?
- Are there licensure or certification requirements?
- What is the employment outlook for this job?
- What is the average salary?
- Based on what you have learned would you consider pursuing this occupation?

Now that you have narrowed your choice, ask yourself if you plan on attending Northwest to obtain an Associate of Applied Science to go to work in your career choice or are you going to transfer to a college or University?

Use the Bulletin to review Career–Technical programs that Northwest has to offer, this will allow you to see which programs may fit or are closely related to what you are interested in pursuing. If you are planning on transferring, begin researching Colleges or Universities that have your program of interest. Review the courses that you will need to complete in order to earn your degree and compare them to the program of study that Northwest has developed. Just a small amount of research can save you from taking unneeded classes. Most of the courses you will take at Northwest will transfer to any public college in Mississippi.
- Remember, if you are planning to transfer, talk to someone from the College/University you are going to attend and make sure you are taking the classes that you need.