

**CAREER SELF-ASSESSMENT**

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### Abstract

This course has allowed me to explore my different career options and why I have chosen my career. In addition, through studying the works of John Holland and other prominent career counseling theorists, I have gained valuable knowledge on assisting my future students and why I chose my path. Finally, I have learned the importance of cultural, religious, and social backgrounds in career counseling. Career counseling is a vital part of the role of a school counselor, as it prepares young people to focus on their futures and to find options on what is best for them.

### **Introduction**

Throughout this course, we have explored different career counseling theories and techniques and our own career choices. Completing the activities outlined in the course allowed me to see why I have chosen my career path. Also, I have seen how God has moved in my life to get me to the career I am in today. Furthermore, I have seen the personal growth and achievement in this course to improve my skill set as a future school counselor to serve my future students in their own career exploration.

### **Career Self-Assessment**

#### **Career Instrument Results**

#### **O\*NET Interest Profiler**

After completing the activities in O\*NET and reviewing my results, I scored zero for all the categories except social. (O\*NET, 2023). These results were unsurprising because I have always been a "people person." John Holland's Theory of Types of Person was insightful during the O\*NET process. I discovered in Holland's theory that I am social, artistic, and realistic. I encompass the qualities of those personality types in my daily life, not only in my occupational repertoire. I am responsible, empathetic, friendly, patient, and generous, as described in the social personality type, but I am also emotional, intuitive, a little disorderly, comforting, humble, and frank. (Niles, et. al., 2021).

These character traits exemplify me because I enjoy working with people and excel at creating relationships with my humble nature and ability to adapt to social situations. However, my personality traits in the artistic and realistic categories also help me relate to many other people. I am emotionally intuitive. I can feel when other people are hurting or if they have something in their hearts that they need to release. My O\*NET career choices were fascinating;

two are my past and current careers. Previously, I worked as a long-term care social worker, one of my top career choices, and as a teacher assistant, my current job. My personality traits help me excel in these positions because of my ability to relate to others.

### **Values Sort Activity**

The Values Sort Activity was helpful when thinking about how my values have made me choose the careers I have. My top three values were inner harmony, independence, and stability. I chose these because I have struggled to find most of them. I have struggled to find inner harmony and stability. I have had periods of my life with independence but recently lost my sense of independence.

I have struggled to find inner harmony for most of my life, partly because I grew up in a large and overly involved family. Growing up was difficult to find my identity, and I struggled immensely with my self-image. In addition, I am the second oldest, and I had difficulty living up to my older sister's accomplishments. I look back on those days, and I cannot help but think about the damage I did to my self-worth. However, as the years progressed, I learned how to improve my self-worth and grew to love myself.

I have strived for stability in my life. However, growing up in such a large family made me realize the value of money and how to stretch a dollar. Not only did I want financial stability for myself, but I wanted relationship stability as well. As I have gotten older, I have learned how to make better financial decisions and relationships. Unfortunately, my parents divorced when I was young, and I often struggled with relationships. However, my relationships as an adult have been prosperous and healthy.

Finally, my independence. I moved to college out of state, had that first taste of freedom, and loved it. After graduating from undergrad, I moved back into my mother's home for a short

period, but I quickly moved into an apartment of my own. Once returning to school for my master's degree, I could not afford to live independently, so I moved back into my mother's house. I long for my independence and privacy. I need to work diligently and graduate to obtain a job in school counseling to regain my independence and freedom.

After completing the values sort, my top two occupations were in the helping professions. This result was no surprise to me as I have always wanted to serve others. My career choices were being an elementary school teacher and a healthcare social worker. I had a successful career as a long-term care social worker before starting my studies at Liberty, and I currently work as a paraprofessional at a local elementary school. These two careers are suitable for my lifestyle and my values. Although working in education does not pay very well, it is about something other than money; it is about helping shape the lives of young people.

### **Spiritual Discernment Decision-Making Factors Survey**

The spiritual discernment decision-making factors survey was insightful in my career goals and planning. As a woman of God, I firmly believe God sets a path for everyone on earth. Therefore, my top three values of importance to me were praying for wisdom to make godly decisions, praying for specific guidance or answers from God, and looking for signs of confirmation from God. (Horton, 2009).

I have been taught to trust in God and pray for his guidance throughout my life. I grew up in church and was taught how God can move in your life. As a result, I have learned how to trust God and pray for wisdom and guidance, particularly in my major life decisions. I have trusted in God in my college and career decisions, as well as in my relationships as well. As a result, God has guided me to where I am today.

When looking for signs of confirmation from God, I think of feelings and experiences that God presents in my life. I long for feelings of belonging and our Lord close to me. When making these major life decisions, I have always "felt" that I was doing what I believed God to be calling me to do. It is an indescribable feeling, but I know I am following the path I am made for.



Based on Horton's approaches, I lean towards the Bull's-Eye Approach. This approach focuses on the more "traditional view." (Horton, 2009). It supports that God has outlined a plan for one's life and that He is in control. I know that this best fits my thinking because of the way I know God has made the plans in my life. I truly believe that God has created everyone for a purpose, and we are all called to fulfill His purpose.

### **Personal Reactions**

My reaction to each instrument was equal across the board. These assessments were all insightful and allowed me to think about why I have made my career choices. The overall results were not surprising. As previously stated, I have always wanted to serve others. These results were fitting for my personality type, and they align with my values.

John Holland's codes can be useful in career counseling when assisting a client or student with career planning. In addition, the Self-Directed Search (SDS) or the Vocational Preference Inventory (VPI) can help guide the client or student in the right direction. (Niles, et., al, 2021). These are good resources. The results of the assessments could be confusing when working with young people. Therefore, I would not use them in my career as a school counselor.

My past has greatly influenced the person I am today. My family has been one of the greatest influences in my lifetime. In addition, I grew up in church, which set the spiritual foundation for me to believe that God has placed me on this earth to serve His purpose. He has

proven to remain faithful in my life and blessed me with my successes, taught me through my failure, and loved me through my mistakes. He is faithful and all-knowing. It reminds me of Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope." (The Jesus Bible, 2021).

### **Evaluation of Instruments**

Truthfully, the assessments were insightful and helpful in understanding my career choices. In addition, they were suitable for my religious, social, and cultural background. However, external factors, such as my energy level and distractions, could have changed my results. Nevertheless, my results were accurate to my beliefs and previous experiences; therefore, I do not think any external factors were an issue when completing the instruments.

### **Conceptualization**

My results from each assessment aligned. The results all showed the professions in the helping field. The results of my Holland scores are equal to those of the other instruments. However, there is a differentiation in my traits. It is "uncommon" to be a realistic-social-artistic type, as the careers and personality types do not align. (Niles, et., al, 2021). I am not surprised; however, I only lean towards my artistic or realistic sides sometimes. I have chosen careers based on my social personality type.

Congruence "describes the degree of fit between an individual's personality type and current or prospective work environment." (Niles, et., al, 2021). The best work environment for my Holland scores would be working with people. It would not be beneficial for me to work from home or with technology. I thrive in social environments and enjoy the community of working with a team.

Career themes and patterns that emerged were those in the helping profession. I commonly received career suggestions in education, healthcare social work, and some type of counseling. This was unsurprising because of my past, present, and future careers. As previously stated, I have always desired to serve the people around me, and I have managed to accomplish that with my career choices.

Spiritual discernment has greatly influenced my previous and present career choices. God is faithful and present in my life and has set forth His master plan for me. I am thankful to serve a God who knows our every move and is there to guide us with his wisdom and grace. I am very pleased with my past and current career choices. Although not every moment is perfect, such is life. The assessments are accurate for my work satisfaction.

As a career counselor, I recommend choosing a career path that aligns with my values. Based upon my research and further learning in this course, it has been proven that when one chooses their career based upon their background and values, their job satisfaction is higher. However, I understand that only some have the luxury of a college education like I did. Therefore, my goals revolved around needing a college degree or higher. As a career counselor, knowing the client or student and finding careers that suit their lifestyle is crucial.

### **Occupational Exploration**

#### **Introduction**

Using the instruments described above, I have explored different career options. Unsurprisingly, the career option results were careers that I considered growing up. Therefore, the instruments were accurate and could be useful tools for career counseling. Unless otherwise cited, the career information presented in this paper was obtained from O\*NET On-Line (National Center for O\*NET Development, 2023).

**Career Field and Occupation of Choice Introduction**

The career I have chosen to outline based on my Holland scores is an elementary school teacher. The O\*NET SOC code is: 25-2021.00. I have chosen to explore this career because it was a career that I wanted to pursue, but my parents who are both educators advised against it.

**Nature of the Work**

The skills, duties, and activities required of an elementary school teacher are outline in O\*NET. A few major items listed are creating classroom standards, creating appropriate lesson plans, collaborate with parents, administrators, and counselors, and support the learning of students. Elementary school teachers provide the foundations of learning in children. Children learn basic skills like reading, writing, and early mathematic skills. Elementary school teachers often prepare students to take their first standardized learning tests through their states.

A typical workday includes teaching lessons and working with students. It also involves collaborating with other teachers, admin, and parents. Some elementary school teachers must supervise lunchtime for their classes and are allowed a planning period. During their planning period, teachers work on grading, lesson planning, and meetings with parents during this time.

**Working Conditions**

Elementary school teachers are typically inside the school building most of the time. However, they are outside during recess, supervising field trips and any outdoor school activity. The hours depend on the school district but are typically around the hours of eight in the morning until three-thirty in the afternoon. Teachers can also be required to work after hours for parent conferences, parent-teacher organization meetings, and school fundraisers.

Teachers who work in elementary schools work with others. For example, they work with a team of teachers for support and collaborate with other school staff. They require supervision

by school admin and must renew licensure every year to ten years, depending upon their years of service. This supervision varies year to year, depending on their service, but typically consists of classroom supervision.

Elementary school teachers can work with children ages four through eleven. The socioeconomic statuses depend on the demographics of the area they are teaching. The demographics can also be drastic from student to student. Psychological aspects of teaching elementary school can be stressful and can take an emotional toll. Teachers can often worry about their students outside of school. Relating back to the demographics of their school.

### **Preparations and Qualifications**

Teachers are required to have a bachelor's degree at minimum. They are also required to hold a teaching license. Regulations vary from state to state. Teachers are required to sit for the PRAXIS exam. To obtain a degree, teachers must complete student teaching. Personal traits include strong communication, public speaking, and understanding of human development.

### **Opportunities and Future Outlook**

Education is a field that will never fade. Students have a right to a free and appropriate public education. Elementary school teachers are in high demand, and the need is projected to grow. School teachers can be found in every state, there are approximately 1,362,300 elementary teachers in America. Although there are opportunities for advancement, most do require further education. They can advance into administrative roles, counseling, and support services positions.

### **Economic and Non-Economic Benefits**

Entry level earnings vary from state to state but the national average is \$61,400 per year. Teachers can enroll in benefits offered by their district. These benefits include medical, dental,

eye insurance, and life insurance benefits. They are also allowed an allotment of sick and personal days every year. In addition to sick and personal leave they can also be allotted personal development days to attend in-services and other educational trainings.

Non-economic benefits include a consistent work schedule. Including summer vacations and major holidays. Some teachers can also receive days off for inclement weather. Teachers can also enjoy the community of other teachers in the school.

### **Disadvantages and/or Special Situations**

As previously stated, elementary school teachers can depend on a steady work schedule. However, they can be required to work extra hour because of other events. Events like parent-teacher conferences, parent teacher organization meetings, and other school events. Additionally, they are not paid overtime for these hours, as they are contracted into their pay. Travel is scarce for teachers. Hazards include the issues involving school safety.

### **Reflection**

There are many occupational aspects that are appealing to me about elementary education. First, I enjoy working with young children and shaping their minds. Secondly, I appreciate the schedule and time off. The only aspect that is disappointing is the issues involving school safety. Currently, I work as a paraprofessional at a rural elementary school, and it is worrisome to think about the potential dangers that could happen.

Occupational characteristics and requirements fit with my career goals because I want to work with elementary school students as a school counselor. I enjoy shaping the minds of young children and the excitement that comes with working in elementary school. It fits with my current values because of my desire to serve the people around me. It allows me to use my social personality traits while helping others.

Occupational characteristics and requirements fit well within my career goals. As previously stated, my goal is to work in elementary school as a school counselor. Working with young children has always been a dream of mine. Advantages and limitations using my career information is that I know I will enjoy a rewarding career. However, the limitations could include finishing my program, relating to burn-out, but I know that with diligent work and dedication, I will achieve my goal.

### **Practical Application**

The client in the scenario is struggling immensely with her future. I can relate to her about not wanting to be a disappointment to her parents. However, understanding the basics of Asian culture, they value education. Also, in Asian culture, they value the opinions of their elders. I consider myself culturally competent and understand that not everyone thinks the way I do.

To better serve this client, knowing the importance of her culture would be crucial. Rapport building would be crucial in working effectively with this client. According to the American School Counselor Association's Ethical Standards for School Counselors, A.1.a "Have a primary obligation to the students, who are to be treated with dignity and respect as unique individuals." (ASCA, 2022). I am legally and ethically bound to respect students with dignity, no matter their cultural background.

The strategy I would use is learning about the client and adjusting our goals based on her needs. Building rapport with the client or student is crucial to a successful counselor-client relationship. More work can be done if the client feels comfortable with the counselor. Counselor needs to keep their respective organization's ethical standards in mind.

Counseling strategies that could be used with this client, since she already completed the O\*NET, could be useful to explore the options the assessment produced. Since she is a Holland-

type SCI, I would find out which personality types she is most connected to and work through her results to find a career path best for her. Also, since she is worried about disappointing her parents, it would be helpful to refer her to an outside resource if the college career counselor is not the counselor who can help her.

Secondly, using interventions from the Learning Theory of Career Counseling. This theory focuses on the factors influencing career decisions making. (Niles, et., al, 2021). Krumboltz's theory is beneficial for counselors to use because it allows the client to maximize their career options and explore new options they may not have considered. However, this can only be successful if the client is willing to make a change. In our case scenario, this could be "hit or miss" for the client related to her desire to please her parents.

### **Conclusion**

In this course, I have learned about career counseling and the reasons I have chosen my career path. I have explored different career counseling theories and learned more about my spiritual and cultural reasons for choosing my career path. Although these reasons produced results that were unsurprising, it was insightful to learn more about myself and ways to assist my future students.

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# Career Counseling Program

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## Introduction

This program serves the students of Springs High School. A rural town in southern Virginia.

Characteristics include low socioeconomic status, poor education levels, substance abuse, and teenage pregnancy.

The population of children varies greatly in socioeconomic status and it is a multiculturally diverse school.

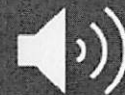
The students of Springs High School do not have many opportunities for further education or career advancement.





# Rationale for the Program

- Strategy for this program includes extensive needs assessments, data collection/evaluation, and strong support from stakeholders.
- This program will target our at-risk population including: lower socioeconomic status who are high achieving, as we have seen an increase of need for these students over the past several years.
- Primarily our African American and Hispanic students with ELL status.
- We will focus on the 10th and 11th grade students within these populations.



# Research Rationale

We want our high-achieving students in low socioeconomic situations to apply to colleges and other post-secondary opportunities, however, we want to encourage students to apply to "selective" colleges.

"the fact that selective colleges typically cost them high-achieving, low-income students less while offering them more generous resources than the non-selective postsecondary institutions they mainly attend." (Hoxby, et. al., 2013).



It is the role and responsibility of the school counselor to prepare for the future success of their students.

"Currently, there is no school professional more important to improving college knowledge than the high school counselor... specially so in the case of disadvantaged populations, as students and parents with low socioeconomic status learn most via their involvement with a counselor." (Belasco, 2013).



# ASCA Mindset and NCDG Standards

## ASCA Mindset:

B-LS 1: "Critical thinking skills to make informed decisions." (ASCA, 2022).

B-LS 7: "Long- and short-term academic, career and social/emotional goals." (ASCA, 2022).

B-SMS 1: "Responsibility for self and actions." (ASCA, 2022).

B-SS 8: "Advocacy skills for self and others and ability to assert self, when necessary." (ASCA, 2022).

## NCDG:

PS1.K1: "Identify your interests, likes, and dislikes." (NCDG, 2004).

PS1.R1: "Assess how your interests and preferences are reflected in your career goals." (NCDG, 2004).

PS1.K10: "Recognize that educational achievement (performance) and/or success at work can affect your self-concept." (NCDG, 2004).



# Career Development Interventions

- O\*NET and MajorClarity online career services resources.

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Using these services will allow us to see the interests and career paths of the students.

- This will assist us in building program tools and using this data to build resources for our student's individual needs.



# Delivery

We will implement this program in stages

First, we will be implementing the data collection process.

Secondly, we will implement the screening process for our programs, member students.

Thirdly, we will implement the program elements.

Finally, we will implement the post data collection after the duration of the program.

We we will consult with administration, teachers, and other stakeholders to ensure the success of our program.



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Resources and pricing include:

Facility costs: \$0

Materials: paper, file folders, filing cabinet, writing utensils, and miscellaneous office supplies. \$1,200

Printer ink: \$600

Copying: \$0



# Evaluation

- We plan to evaluate the success of this program from our learning objectives and outcomes.
- We will provide students with post program follow-ups to continue to grow our data.
- We will separate our data into different categories including:
  - Students who attended selective and non-selective universities.
  - Students who entered trade school.
  - Students who enlisted in the military.
  - Students who entered the workforce.



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