

EDUC 1300

Career Exploration Research Paper

Student Learning Outcomes

	At the successful completion of this research paper the student will be able to:
LO1.	Strengthen academic performance by identifying key components of the successful student.
LO2.	Develop self-awareness and career goals within an academic atmosphere.
LO3.	Evaluate the quality and conclusions of the research to which they are exposed, which can simultaneously influence human thought, emotion and behavior.
LO6.	Compose writing assignment(s) using Standard American English and basic computer skills.

Why Should I Research Careers?

Choosing a vocation, craft, or career will be one of the biggest decisions you will ever make in your life. You will spend about ten times the amount of time working in your career as you do in school preparing for it. It will, to some extent, determine the level of satisfaction and happiness in your life. According to a study done by the University of Aberdeen, “Job satisfaction is the most critical factor for life satisfaction and well-being,” (Medical Press, 2006, <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2006-06-job-satisfaction-tops-poll-life.html>). This class will be your “one shot” within the college setting to become fully informed about this important decision.

General Directions:

Write a career research paper, in APA style, that explores in detail a career of your choice. The full document, including title page and reference page should be 7 to 10 pages. An abstract will NOT be required. There will be many steps in writing this paper (see specific directions for each step below).

To prepare to write this paper, you should first complete several assessments. We will complete these throughout the course of this class, but they are listed here for easy reference:

1. Career Cruising Assessment Matchmaker and My Skills

(<https://public.careercruising.com/en/>) Username: NCTC, Password: gocenter

2. Career Cruising Learning Styles Inventory (<https://public.careercruising.com/en/>)

Username: NCTC, Password: gocenter

3. Multiple Intelligence Survey (MIS)

<https://www.literacynet.org/mi/assessment/findyourstrengths.html>

4. Personality Inventory (PAP) or www.16personalities.com

Also, you may want to visit the Student Resources page under NCTC Career Services on the NCTC website for additional information, surveys, and career assistance

(<http://www.nctc.edu/career-services/student-resources.html>). If you cannot decide on a job, craft, or career to research, please make an appointment to talk with me.

Additional Resources for the Paper

Most of the information needed for the general career description section of your paper can be located via Career Cruising, but here are some additional resources you can use.

The Occupational Outlook Handbook

1. Log on at <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/>
2. You can enter the career name in the search box-it must be the exact title or career OR
3. Click on one of the major job groups on the left-hand column of the screen.
4. From the job group, select the career that you want to research. If it is not listed here, go back to the list of major job groups and select another one.

America's Career Infonet

1. Log on at www.acinet.org
2. Click on Occupation Information.
3. Click on Occupational Profile.
4. Click on the major job group that best fits the career.
5. Click on the career within the major job group. (You may have to go back to this group if the career is not listed.)

The Sloan Cornerstone Career Center –Healthcare, Science, and Technology

1. Log on at <http://www.careercornerstone.org/>
2. Click Degree Fields in column at left.
3. Scroll all the way down to see the career choices.
4. Be sure to check out “Profiles of Professionals” and “A Day in the Life” for great informational interviews.

Sections of the Paper

Follow the outline provided below to achieve all the credit available as indicated on the grading rubric for this assignment. These sections will be followed with additional directions and guidance in the remainder of this document.

The Career Research Paper will consist of the following sections:

- 1. *Title Page*** (This will be in APA format) (1 page)
- 2. *Paper Content***
 - **Part 1:** Why Did You Choose This Career? (1 page)
 - **Part 2:** Job Description/Education Required (1-2 pages)
 - **Part 3:** A Day in the Life (1 page)
 - **Part 4:** Positives/Challenges in this Career (1 page)
 - **Part 5:** Personal Assessment (1 page)
 - **Part 6:** From Here to There (1 page)
- 3. *Reference Page*** (APA style) (1 page)

The Paper Section By Section

Title Page

Your paper should include a title page in APA style. You do **NOT** have to include an Abstract.

View this slideshow from the Purdue Writing Lab for general APA formatting information for your title page and the entire paper.

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/apa_powerpoint_slide_presentation.html

Paper Part 1: Introduction: Why Did You Choose This Career?

Write a one-page explanation of why you chose this career. Consider the following questions to help you write this part of the paper:

- Did someone inspire you to follow this career path?
- What interests you in this career path?
- Think about the values you hold and how those values tie into your career choice. Did your values influence your career choice? If so, how? Be specific. If your values and career choice don't match, then why did you choose this career?
- Why do you think you can work in this career and be happy?
- Include the results of the Career Exploration Assignment (the results of the inventories you took in Career Cruising) and an explanation of how these results match what you think you would like to do. If your career cruising results vary wildly between assessments, address why you think this is happening.
- Make sure this section is well-written and cohesive. In other words, don't just go through and answer the questions above and string them together in a paragraph. Write a unified response to the question of why you have chosen this career.

Paper: Part 2: Job Description/Education Requirements

Write a 1-2 page description of your chosen career and its educational requirements.

This should include:

- the career's title
- job description (what you will do and where)
- required education
- expected salary
- job growth rates and unemployment rates for this career
- personality characteristics helpful for this career

In this section, describe your career in terms of career demands, requirements, and expectations. Include a description of the physical environment, time schedule, location, salary and benefits. What is the typical pay? (Try to find the most up-to-date local information.) What is the job outlook? What are the growth opportunities? Be as specific as possible. (A good source for this section of your paper is the Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook).

You should also include a discussion of the education required for entry level to this career. Do you have to have a degree? Special certification? Internship? Pass a test? Will you need to continue your education even after you are hired? What majors are recommended? What are related occupations for this career? Are there different career paths you might take?

Paper: Part 3: A Day in the Life

Write a one-page description of “a day in the life” of someone in this chosen career.

Knowing about a career is one thing, but do you really understand what you would be doing from day to day? This section helps you put yourself in the “shoes” of someone working in this line of work. Interview someone currently employed in this field. What do they like and dislike about their job? What advice would they give you? What do you think you will like and dislike about this occupation?

- What will you spend your time doing all day?
- Will you be in an office or outside? What will your work environment look like?
- Will you be expected to travel?
- Will you be expected to take on extra duties or work overtime?
- Will you work with a team or work independently?

- Most of this information will be obtained through your personal interview (see personal interview guidelines). Many people who prepared for a particular career later find they did not like the job after all. This is your chance to gain an understanding of what will be required of you daily so that you can see if this is the best fit for your time. Remember, on most days of the week, your engagement in work tasks will take up most of your time. Is this really how you want to spend it?

Paper: Part 4: Positives/Challenges of the Profession Today

Write a one-page analysis of the positive changes and challenges facing your chosen profession.

Consider the following: (draw from your research and your interview).

- What are some current issues or changes in this field?
- What are the concerns of people in your career today?
- Does your career have a good occupational outlook?

Paper: Part 5: Personal Assessment

Write a one-page analysis of your personality type as it relates to your career.

Consider the following:

- Are specific personality types, intelligences, styles, or skills required for this career?
- Are you and your career a match? Using the results of the Myers Briggs (Personality), the Learning Styles, and the Multiple Intelligence assessments and the skills and interests inventories you did on Career Cruising, outline why you think this career is a match for your personality, learning style, multiple intelligences, interests, and skills? Make sure you refer to your assessment results in your discussion.

Paper Part 6: From Here to There

Write a one-page assessment of whether your research has concluded in your affirmation of this career, job, or vocation choice.

Consider the following:

- Will you be continuing along this planned course or will you now have to make a different plan?
- What do you need to do to get from NCTC to this career?
- Outline the steps you will take next, including specifics on transfer institutions and possible employers. What colleges offer the required major? Who are the big employers in this field? Will you have to move?
- What are the major obstacles you anticipate and how will you overcome them? What are some resources you can use to assist you in overcoming those obstacles?
- Mention some professional associations you could join while still a student.
- Another part of this section should include your assessment of skills introduced in this class and how they will help you better achieve your goal. **You must name three skills we have covered this far in class and discuss how you will use them to achieve your goal.** For example, it could be a specific time management approach that will allow you to better focus on classes and work so that you can complete your degree.

Paper: Reference Page

- For every resource you use, provide a citation in APA format. (Author. Book. Place of Publication: Publisher, Date.) **Each source should be cited in the body of your paper also.**
- You will need at least five resources. Many of these will be online databases, but at the very least one should be a book (You have your textbook, right?). Another should consist of a professional journal in your field and one source may be your interview with an individual currently employed in your area.
- Do not use Wikipedia!
- Your paper will be returned without a grade if you do not include a reference page as it will be highly suspect of plagiarism.
- Remember you are using the APA Style and not MLA or Chicago. The following link will provide you with citation examples and comparisons to other styles if that helps you.
The link is:
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/using_research/citation_style_chart.html

Good Luck! I hope you gain some valuable insight into the career of your choice. If you need help, please use your resources! These include me, the Counseling or Career Center, the Library, the Writing Center and your classmates.

Career Research Grading Rubric

Criteria	Excellent	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Poor	Missing
Paper Format APA style/Length (10 pts)	Excellent formatting with very few and minor mistakes; length is 7-10 pages total	Very good formatting with above average attention to formatting and detail; length is just short of the requirement 8 pts	Average attempt to follow APA formatting- spacing and font is correct; paper is 1 page short. 6 pts	Below average attempt to follow APA format- double-spaced not used and 12 point font not used; paper is short at least 2 pages 4 pts	Sloppy and inconsistent formatting; paper is at least 3 pages short 2 pts	No attempt toward APA formatting; length is short more than 3 pages 0 pts
Citations Internal and Reference Page (10 pts)	5 or more sources are used internally and on the reference page at the end of the paper with very few mistakes	5 or more sources are used internally and on reference page with above-average attention to detail 8 pts	5 or more sources used and documented with average detail; sources may be documented on reference page but not all are used internally 6 pts	4 sources documented internally and on reference page 4 pts	Less than 4 sources documented internally or on reference page 2 pts	No sources documented- paper is returned ungraded or for a zero 0 pts
Grammar (10 pts)	No significant grammatical errors	1 significant grammatical error is present 8 pts	2 significant grammatical errors are present 6 pts	3 significant grammatical errors are present 4 pts	4 significant grammatical errors are present 2 pts	5 or more significant grammatical errors are present 0 pts
Part I: Introduction (10 pts)	Excellent understanding of this attribute- student traces decision well and compares with Career Cruising inventories 10 pts	Above-average understanding of this attribute- student traces decision but doesn't include comparison with Career Cruising inventories 8 pts	Average understanding of this attribute- student traces decision but leaves out specific details or relevant reasons 6pts	Below average understanding of this attribute- very little explanation or detail is provided 4 pts	Incomplete evidence/explanation for this section of the paper. 2 pts	This section of the paper is missing 0 pts
Part 2: Job Description/ Education (15 pts)	Excellent understanding of this attribute- student provides very specific information about each of the required categories; very well-researched 15 pts	Above-average understanding of this attribute- student provides information about each of the required categories; well-researched 12 pts	Average understanding of this attribute; student provides information about the categories but may be missing one category or the research may be lacking 9 pts	Below-average understanding of this attribute; several categories in the job description are missing or not well-researched 6 pts	Incomplete evidence for this section of the paper. Many categories of the job description are missing and research is not present. 3 pts	This section of the paper is missing 0 pts

Part 3: A Day in the Life (10 pts)	Excellent understanding of this attribute- student provides very specific information regarding daily tasks performed in this career; very well-researched 10 pts	Very good, but not exceptional understanding of this attribute; details and research are present 8 pts	Average understanding of this attribute; details are general; research is present but not substantial 6 pts	Below average understanding of this attribute; details are limited and general; research is not present 4 pts	Incomplete evidence for this section of the paper. Daily tasks are not listed; no research is present. 2 pts	This section of the paper is missing 0 pts
Part 4: Positives and Challenges in the Profession Today (10 pts)	Excellent understanding of this attribute- strong analysis of the challenges and the positive changes of the profession today 10 pts	Very good, but not exceptional understanding of this attribute- analysis of the positives and challenges are present 8 pts	Average understanding of this attribute; Positives and challenges explained but analysis is general 6 pts	Below-average understanding of this attribute- Positives and challenges are presented but there is no analysis 4 pts	Incomplete evidence for this section of the paper; few or no positives or challenges are listed and no analysis is supplied 2 pts	This section of the paper is missing 0 pts
Part 5: Personal Assessment (15 pts)	Excellent understanding of this attribute with multiple intelligences, personality type and learning style all included; research is present and used to support analysis 15 pts	Very good, but not exceptional understanding of this particular attribute- all three inventories/career connections included; research is present and used to support analysis 12 pts	Average understanding of this attribute; one of the three inventories/connections is missing; weakly supported with research 9 pts	Average understanding of this attribute with discussion of two or the attributes missing, OR, discussion is more like a journal entry with little research base 6 pts	Incomplete evidence for this section of the paper. No discussion of any of the inventories and/or the career. 3 pts	This section of the paper is missing 0 pts
Part 6: From Here to There (10 pts)	Excellent understanding of this attribute with detailed explanation of next steps to achieve career/job; includes at least 3 attributes of a successful student; very well-researched 10 pts	Very good understanding of this attribute with a detailed explanation of the next steps to achieve career/job; well-researched 8 pts	Average understanding of this attribute; explanation was lacking in detail or too short; research is present but lacking 6 pts	Poor understanding of this attribute; explanation is lacking in detail; research is lacking 4 pts	Incomplete evidence for this section of the paper. No specific plan was explained, no research was presented. 2 pts	This section of the paper is missing 0 pts

Learning Objective Mastery	Meets Expectations	Doesn't Meet Expectations	No Submission
LO 1: Strengthen academic performance by identifying key components of the successful student.			
LO 2: Develop self-awareness and career goals within an academic atmosphere.			
LO 3: Evaluate the quality and conclusions of the research to which they are exposed.			
LO 6: Compose writing assignments using Standard American English and basic computer skills.			
PO 1: Critical Thinking			
PO 2: Communication			
PO 5: Social Responsibility			
PO 6: Personal Responsibility			