# Chapter 4: College Courses and Careers

# —Learning for a Lifetime

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| **Ideas for Instruction and Instructor Training** | **Videos and CD-ROMs** | **Media Resources for Instructors** | **Media Resources for Students** |
| **Instructor’s Manual (IM)**  Includes a brief lesson plan for Chapter 4, chapter objectives, lecture launchers, commentary on exercises in the book, and case studies.  **Test Bank (in IM)**  Multiple Choice, True/False, Short Answer and Essay Questions. Also available in ExamView® electronic format, which can be customized to fit your needs. | ***10 Things Every Student Needs to Succeed in College* Video**  6-minute segment entitled “Explore Your Career Options.”  **ExamView®** **CD-ROM**  Computerized version of the Test Bank items for Chapter 4. | JoinIn™ Hand-held audience response device allows students immediate response to multiple-choice questions, polls, and interactive exercises.  **Multimedia Manager 2007 CD-ROM**  PowerPoint presentations, video clips, images, and web links help with assembly, editing, and presentation of multimedia lectures. | **iLrn® Pin-Coded Website**  Contains self-assessments, electronic journals that encourage students to reflect on their progress, essay questions and exercises, and Test Your Knowledge interactive quizzes for chapter 4.  **InfoTrac**® **College Edition**  May be bundled with text.  *Keywords:* college success, liberal arts, goal setting, values, colleges, universities. |

## A. Chapter Objectives

1. To provide tips for thriving in the current economy
2. To illustrate how majors, personal interests and careers both are and aren’t linked
3. To introduce a timely process for career planning and the selection of a major
4. To identify skills that employers seek in college graduates
5. To engage in building tools necessary for finding employment

## B. Timing of Chapter Coverage

The introduction of career-decision making material could be addressed in the middle of the term. This is a good time for students to sort out their interests and reaffirm their educational pursuits. This does not mean that they have to declare a major or have a specific career in mind when the course is over. However, by this time they should have a better sense of who they are and what classes may be of interest to them.

## C. About This Chapter

Not all students are self-disciplined enough to engage in rigorous career planning. Some are simply not mentally or emotionally ready. Still others, especially the older student, are so sure of the choices they’ve already made that they will regard any time you spend on career planning as a waste of their time.

At best, you can expect your students to understand the process of career planning by the end of this chapter. They should know the major steps of the process, how to perform them, and what resources exist on your campus to help them as they move along the path of goal setting and career planning. This seemingly “modest” achievement is really very important in that it lets the students know that there is a process they can follow, and informs them of who can help them when they are ready. It is also another way of demonstrating your concern for them.

Before beginning this section, you should decide how much time you want to devote to it. Assess where your students’ attitudes and motivation for career planning lie and then decide on how much and what you will cover from this chapter. Use some of the Lecture Launchers or chapter exercises to stimulate interest before you teach the chapter. Depending on your students’ attitudes toward career planning, you might decide to spend time on other activities and deal with this topic over several class periods.

## D. Suggested Outline for Addressing Topics in Chapter 4

**STEP I:** BEGIN WITH A LECTURE LAUNCHER OR ICEBREAKER ACTIVITY

**STEP II:** EMPLOY A VARIETY OF CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

* 1. Use PowerPoint presentation from ***Multimedia Manager 2007*** resource
  2. Expand on key lesson themes
  3. Involve peer leaders
  4. Use chapter exercises
  5. Engage students in learning through case studies

**STEP III**: REVIEW & PREVIEW

a. Address common questions and concerns about the topic

b. Writing reflection

c. Prepare for next class

## Expanded Lesson Plan

### STEP I: Lecture Launchers and Icebreakers

* Encourage students to think about members of their families and the attitudes they have toward their work. Try to end the discussion by having them recognize that today’s students have a lot more choices. After this discussion, ask your students to submit at least two questions about career choices. Specifically, what do they want to learn from the chapter? You might then compile these questions in a list and distribute them to the whole class to be used as a guide to the chapter. These questions will also be a guide to you as you teach the unit.
* Initiate a discussion your students’ responses to the *Self Assessment* on page 54. Lead into a discussion on why preparation for a career is an important reason for going to college.
* It may be of value to share some of your career development experiences. Think back to your first year. Did you begin college knowing what career you wanted? If so, did you stick to that decision? Were you uncomfortable with that inevitable question, “What’s your major?” Did you think that you were alone in feeling clueless about your future? Encourage your students to share their career goals (or lack of goals) with each other. This will help them realize that many of their fellow students are as undecided as they are. You want to let them know that being undecided is okay. Teaching career planning is also a way of letting first-year students know that there are sources that can help them make decisions.

### STEP II: Classroom Activities

**a.** **Use the PowerPoint presentations in *Multimedia Manager 2007*** **to complement your mini**

**lecture.**

**b. Key Teaching Themes**

* ***The Just So Stories***

Address points in the section on pages 55-56. Use the “questions” *why, who, how, what, where* and *when* to emphasize this section.

* **Exploring Your Interests**

Discuss and describe the tools and concepts associated with the Holland Career inventory model. Then place students in small groups to share with each other how they can connect their interests and majors to their careers. Ask students to use the Blog-opp questions on page 57 to guide their discussion.

* **Career Counselor/Center Visit**

Invite your campus career counselor to class, or plan a class trip to the counseling center to help students become more aware of campus resources and how they can use them. In either case, the career counselor can provide an authoritative summary of what you have

already taught. Ask the counselor to distribute literature about the counseling center and all of the resources available to your students. This is a good way of demonstrating the

commitment of your campus to the students’ ultimate success. Whether or not you choose

to invite the career counselor to class, at the close of this unit your students will have

identified, articulated, and started to integrate their interests, current skills, aptitudes,

personality characteristics, and values.

**c. Group Activities**

* Have teams of students generate a list of academic or personal problems they might need

help with. Arrange the problems into categories and identify campus resources that

can offer help.

* Have students jot down five things they find interesting. Collect responses and form small

“interest groups” by students who listed similar things. Have each group identify what

kinds of careers their interests might be useful for. Or, form four-member teams with the

same academic major or students who share similar career interests. One pair of students within each team might research internship opportunities while the other pair investigates

related service learning opportunities. The group’s final product would represent a

composite of available “experiential learning” opportunities tied to their majors, interests,

skills, etc.

**d. Peer Leader Assistance**

* Consider inviting a recent graduate of your institution into the classroom to discuss his or

her experiences in searching for a major and related career. This could be a graduate who had trouble choosing a major or who has had more than one career. You could also arrange for a small panel of several seniors who can discuss how they went about making their decisions about courses and careers.

* Prepare your personal career planning timetable as outlined on page 61-62. Make copies for your students and discuss your plan with them. Invite students to create their own plan.
* Provide a list of those campus personnel and offices which support activities and programs that can help students confirm their interests i.e. Service Learning, Internships, Study Abroad, etc.
  1. **Case Studies**

**Andrew**

For as long as he could remember, Andrew had wanted to be a physician. So when he entered college, he majored in science as preparation for medical school. But although he earned good grades in his science courses, he found that he was bored with science in general. He made an appointment with his adviser and told him of his feelings. His advisor said, “Andrew, I know what you mean. Lots of people go through this stage. But your grades are so good that I’m going to urge you to continue. Then, when you begin medical school, you can decide whether or not you want to stay there. If you don’t, your education will have prepared you for a number of other careers, so what have you got to lose?” Andrew left the office feeling confused. “If I don’t enjoy something,” he said, “why should I keep on doing it?”

**Discussion Questions:**

1. What’s your opinion of the advice the advisor gave Andrew?
2. Physicians make good money. Is this a strong reason for Andrew to stick to his plans? Explain your answer.
3. How might a visit to the career center provide Andrew with some insight into his dilemma?
4. Andrew is getting a solid liberal arts education anyway. What’s he really got to lose by staying on track for the present?

**Becca**

Becca came to college and took classes for a year and a half. Not knowing what she wanted to major in, she didn’t do that well in her classes. So, she decided to take a year off from college and work. Becca has been working as a bookkeeper for a printing company for one semester now. While she likes making money, she is still not satisfied and thinks that going back to college may be a good idea for her. However, she still has no clue of what career or major to choose. Becca is apprehensive about going back to college because she is so undecided.

**Discussion Questions:**

1. What is Becca’s dilemma?
2. What suggestions could you give Becca?
3. What issues should Becca address before deciding whether or not to go back to school?
4. How can Becca come to a decision about college and work?
5. Where can Becca go for help?
   1. **Chapter Exercises**

* **Exercise 4.1: What Are Your Life Goals?**

Choosing a career starts with identifying goals. Have students complete this exercise individually in class. They can share their rankings in pairs or groups. Encourage them to share their reasoning behind their choices.

* **Exercise 4.2: Finding Your Interests**

Part A of this exercise can be completed individually or directed by you in a group setting. Part B could become part of a larger assignment, such as a 3-5 page paper.

* **Exercise 42.3: Using Your Career Library**

Again, this is an exercise that students will need to complete out of class.

* **Exercise 4.4: Investigating an Occupation**

This exercise can be completed out of class. You may also want to have them record their reaction to the experience.

* **Exercise 4.5: My current Thinking about Career Choice**

If you’re only going to assign your students one exercise from this chapter, this is the one.

Be sure to give adequate feedback to the students’ responses. This exercise can also be

completed out of class.

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### STEP III: Review and Preview

**REVIEW**

**a. Address Common Questions and Concerns of First-Year Students:**

* ***I’m only a first-year student. Why should I be concerned with careers now?***

Answer: Many students will not see the need for exploring majors or careers so early in their education. Explain to them that selecting a major and career is a process that involves self-knowledge and takes time. Encourage them to begin this process right away so that when the time comes for a decision, they will be prepared.

* ***I already know what I want to do. Why do I have to go through all this boring stuff?***

Answer: While some students will have a strong sense of their career, today’s work world is constantly changing and will require that they come well prepared and with the understanding that there are no guarantees of ongoing employment. They stand to change jobs more than ever. Explain to students that they must explore and identify their interests, values, goals, personality type, and aptitudes, and accurately link them to possible careers.

* ***How do I know I will have the skills and competencies I need when I graduate?***

Answer: The responsibility for knowing what skills are needed for various professions falls on the student. The last thing they want to do is graduate from college and find out that they are missing a skill, competency, or certification that is critical for employment in a particular field. Emphasize that we are all responsible for our careers. Students can do research to find out what skills and competencies are needed for the fields they have chosen.

* ***If I’m not signed up for accounting first term, can I still major in business (or any similar curriculum-related question)?***

Answer: Sometimes first-year students think that if they are not registered for a particular class required for a major during the first term or year, it means they cannot select that discipline as a major. They may see their friends or roommate starting off with a class in their major and begin to worry. Assure them that there will be time to “catch up” on taking classes required for certain majors as they explore different careers. However, encourage students to systematically explore and plan if they are undecided about their major. Warn them of the danger of taking random courses for too long and accumulating excess credits that may not meet the requirements for the major they finally decide on.

**b. Writing Reflection**

* Have students complete the questions on pages 71-72

**PREVIEW FOR NEXT CLASS**

Ask students to complete Exercise 5.3 and bring it to the next class.

## E. Test Questions

**Multiple Choice - choose ONE answer per question.**

1. According to the text you are, more or less
2. solely responsibly for your career
3. likely to be kept employable by having a college degree.
4. a & b
5. none of the above
6. To advance your career, you must
7. accept the risks that accompany employment.
8. plan for the future.
9. a & b
10. none of the above
11. According to John Holland, for someone in the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ category, accounting would be an ideal occupation.
12. realistic
13. social
14. investigative
15. conventional
16. According to John Holland, for someone in the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ category, marine science would be an ideal occupation.
    1. realistic
    2. social
    3. investigative
    4. conventional

5. The process of making a career choice begins with

a. understanding your values and motivations.

b. identifying your interests.

c. linking learning styles and interests.

d. All of the above.

6. A good career plan should include

a. building on your strengths and developing your weaker skills.

b. copying a friend’s resume and cover letter.

c. making as much money as soon as possible.

d. staying focused on one company.

7. Part-time work can

a. build your resume in an area of interest.

b. interfere with other valuable activities.

c. earn you extra money.

d. all of the above

**True/False**

8. A college degree does not guarantee employment.

9. Career choices are complex and involve many factors.

10. Aptitudes are not inherent.

11. You should choose your career based on future earnings.

**Short Answer**

12. Name the six general categories of people identified by John Holland.

13. List at least three factors affecting career choice.

14. List four differences between content skills and transferable skills.

15. List four resources you can use in your search for an off-campus job.

**Essay**

16. Which of Holland’s six categories do you best fall into? What are some careers that Holland predicts would appeal to you? Which one do you find yourself most interested in? How

would you go about investigating the career?

17. If you have already identified a career that you wish to pursue, shadow someone for a day who is presently working in that field. Write an essay describing your activities for the day, why you wish to pursue this field, what strengths you presently possess that supports your desire to pursue this field, and what you still need to do to in order to qualify for a position in this field.

18. Describe the career you wish to have in ten years. Develop a cover letter and resume that would guarantee that you get this job.

19. Describe the career that you wish to have five in years. Interview someone who is presently working in this field. What academic preparation is required for this job? What challenges did the person encounter while preparing for this job and how did he/she address these issues?

**Chapter 4 Answer Key**

1. a, p. 56
2. c, p. 56
3. d, p. 60
4. c, p. 60
5. d, p. 61-62
6. a, p. 62
7. d, p. 65
8. true, p. 56
9. true, p. 61
10. false, p. 61
11. false, p. 61

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## F. Web Resources

**Choosing a Major –** <http://www2.ucsc.edu/porter/choosing.html>

This page debunks some of the myths about choosing a major, such as “Picking a major and a career are basically the same thing” and “The major I pick now will determine my lifelong career.”

**The Career Key –** <http://www.careerkey.org/english/>. Direct your students to The Career Key, a free test that measures skills, abilities, values, interest, and personality. It also offers information about the jobs for which it identifies aptitude.

**Resumes –** <http://jobsmart.org/tools/resume/index.cfm>. A feature of JobStar Central, this page offers information about creating a resume, as well as samples of different resume formats. It includes a feature that can help students determine what kind of resume would work best for them.

**Cover Letters –** <http://www.careerlab.com/letters/default.htm>. From CareerLab, this page offers great strategies for writing various types of cover letters—everything from answering a want ad to sending the most appropriate thank you letter after an interview. Each article is accompanied by an extensive set of examples your students can use as models.

**Career Planning** **-** <http://quintcareers.com/> is a career planning and job-hunting resource guide and <http://www.careerbuilder.com> is a comprehensive career planning website.

**The Self-Directed Search –** <http://www.self-directed-search.com/>

For around $10, your students can take the official John Holland Self-Directed Search assessment on this page. The test takes fifteen minutes and results include a list of occupations, fields of study, and even leisure activities well-suited to the taker’s particular type.

**What Can I Do with a Major In …?** – <http://www.uncwil.edu/stuaff/career/Majors/>

The University of North Carolina at Wilmington offers this site, which will give your students an idea of what career paths their major will open up for them.