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Teaching *Occupational Outlook Handbook* for Students in Career Development

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Overview

This lesson plan is designed for a 60-minute information literacy class to teach students who are taking SD110 (Student Development 110) at York College, City University of New York. The goal of SD110 is to effectively engage students “in the intensive exploration of study skills techniques, career and vocational development, values formation, learning processes and all areas pertinent to the college experience.” This lesson plan was prepared in an attempt to familiarize students with the library’s available resources on careers and vocational development to help them achieve this goal.

Objectives

After this information literacy class, students will be able to:

- ✓ Recognize specific library resources on careers and vocational development in various formats;
- ✓ Identify and select related resources catering to their own careers and vocational goals;
- ✓ Explore, navigate and utilize a chosen resource efficiently so as to retrieve career-related information satisfying their own needs;
- ✓ Evaluate information critically and demonstrate understanding that career-related information retrieved through officially-recognized resources has more accuracy, authority and objectivity;
- ✓ Recognize intrinsic and extrinsic values in choosing a career and their impact on career satisfaction;
- ✓ Appropriately cite retrieved information using APA style and know how to take advantage of auto cite features in OneSearch, Academic Search Complete, and Google Scholar.

Teaching aids

- ✓ One power point file that introduces evolution of librarian as a profession;
- ✓ One MS Word documents that lists five scenarios;
- ✓ Three pictures that illustrate three important factors in building a successful career.

Class duration

60 minutes.

Teaching Steps

Step One: Warm-Up (approximately 5 minutes). The warm-up section doesn't have a fixed pattern to follow. However, it should basically cover self-introduction, service contact information, subject liaison webpage, study room policy, printing account and York email, and remote access.

Step Two: Lead-In Question (less than 10 minutes). In this section a PowerPoint is designed to show that the connection between librarians as a profession and materials that carry text. The last slide will present students a prediction by USA Today that librarians won't exist in 2030. This will result in two logical and important questions to students in this class:

- ✓ Do you believe this prediction or not? And why?
- ✓ How much do you trust the source of information? And why?

Tips for this section

- Time spent on explaining the connection between librarians as a profession and materials that carry the text should be less than 5 minutes;
- While asking these two questions, the instructor should be standing in the front of the classroom, making eye contact with students, surveying the classroom, and observing who might be interested in answering the questions; while students answer questions, the instructor should walk to him/her and demonstrate attention, interest, and respect;
- If possible, take time to follow-up and personalize the answers;
- Ultimately and most importantly, the key point is that the instructor should be able to use the last two questions and guide students to recognize the significant differences between popular resources and officially-recognized resources, stressing the rationale why *Occupational Outlook Handbook* is introduced in this class. If time allows, the instructor should demonstrate the printed copy and explain to students its advantage, for instance, the Career Aptitude Test;
- The instructor should save the webpages in a separate folder as an alternative just in case the link in the last slide can't be opened or opens very slowly.

Step Three: Occupational Outlook Handbook and the Scenarios (approximately 20 minutes). This section should be started with the introduction of *Occupational Outlook Handbook* on the "Databases and More" page of the library website. The career names that sound familiar to

students, for instance, accountant, lawyer, or teacher, are preferred to demonstrate the search. The goal is to teach students to learn how to search a career by its name or browse by occupation groups. After students get a sense of the features of *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, the instructor will present students these four suggested scenarios:

Scenario 1. Your friend wants to be a Multimedia Artist or Animator. What are the important qualities that one should possess for that profession?

Scenario 2. Jack met a tie-and-suit guy in a social gathering. He said he was a Management Analyst. It sounds like a big shot job. Jack knew nothing about this title and was intimidated by it. So Jack wants to know

- ✓ What does a Management Analyst do?
- ✓ What is the average salary for a Management Analyst?
- ✓ What is the desired educational background?
- ✓ What the job market will be like in the coming 10 years?

Scenario 3. John's cousin wants to be an Occupational Therapist. Will a Bachelor's degree be enough for her? She is more a problem-solving and fast-paced person. You want to convince her that Occupational Therapist may not be a good career for her. But how?

Scenario 4. Mary wants to be a Historian. Is this a fast-growing occupation in the coming 10 years? What kind of educational background is required for her to get to an advanced-level position?

Tips for this section

- Scenarios should be presented to students one at a time. In other words, the instructor should show one scenario and hide the rest;
- Scenarios should **NOT** be given to students in printed handout; otherwise, there is a large probability that some students, who are fast-paced and goal-oriented, would accomplish the sheet in a few minutes as an assignment;
- The instructor should memorize the scenarios and their accompanying questions so that he/she will know when to ask what. By so doing, the class will be kept in control or as the pace that instructor expects;
- The instructor should walk around or stand behind students, observing students' activities and making corresponding interactions. By so doing, the instructor will create an energetic classroom atmosphere;
- The instructor should be able to pick up some questions through observations or on the spot spontaneously and render them to the whole class, which delivers students a message that the instructor not only gives his/her support to an individual but also cares about the whole group.

Step Four: What Makes You Choose This Career? (approximately 7 minutes). Helping students choose a career is not the goal of this information literacy class. However, when the class comes to this point, it might be very useful for the instructor to ask students what they have in their minds about their dream careers and what factors, both internal and external, they have considered in making a decision. If possible, the instructor could use himself/herself as example and share with student what made him/her to choose the current career.

Step Five: Basic Principles that Make a Successful Career (less than 5 minutes). This section should be treated as a bonus. It could be included in the teaching if the time permits. The instructor could ask students to list things that will contribute to a successful career. After the interaction with students, the instructor could share his/her own perspective. For instance, I chose three pictures that illustrate my thought what makes a successful career.

- ✓ Picture one: Education is the king!
- ✓ Picture two: Perseverance: Try it one more time!
- ✓ Picture three: You are the artist!

Step Six: APA Citation (approximately 10 minutes). APA citation is the required citing style for this course. Considering the time limit, the instructor will focus on the introduction of library's available resources on APA citation without going into details about APA itself. The basic coverage should include

- ✓ The primary patterns of ALA reference list and in-text citation in Purdue OWL
- ✓ LibGuide "Citation and Plagiarism;"
- ✓ Auto-citation feature in databases and Google Scholar, if time permits;
- ✓ "Tools for Bibliography" available in the library's webpage, if time permits.

Step Seven: Summary. In this section, the instructor will briefly review what has been covered in this class. It needs to be point out to students that more and better services are available at the Career Center of York College. Library's Contact webpage and instructor's contact information should be addressed again just in case students may have questions to be answered after this class.

Note: Two PowerPoint slides accompanying this teaching plan are not included due to copyright issue. If you need them for educational purpose, please feel free to contact me.