USING SELF-EFFICACY AS A GUIDE FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGE ADULT RE-ENTRY STUDENTS: STAYING EMPLOYABLE THROUGH CAREER PREPARATION

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
For the degree of Master of Science in Counseling,
Career Counseling

By

Jesus Gomez

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The thesis of Jesus Gomez is approved:

___________________________ _______________________
Luis Rubalcava, Ph.D. Date

___________________________ _______________________
Robert Doctor, Ph.D. Date

___________________________ _______________________
Julie Hau, Ph.D. Chair Date

California State University, Northridge
Dedication

This work is dedicated to my parents Jesus and Angelina Hernandez; but more importantly to my wife Kenia and two children, Ashley and Dylan that managed without my presence several times so I was able to complete the graduate program. Furthermore, without my wife’s strong support, encouragement, and patience, I would have never been in this position to be certified as a specialized professional. I want to thank as well all my professors, cohort peers, and mentors that gave me the strength to believe in myself. And finally, I want to honor and pay my respect in memory of Dr. Gregory Jackson by dedicating my accomplishment to him. His guidance, mentorship, support, and encouragement lifted me over the top to complete the graduate program.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 1: Introduction</th>
<th>1-12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact of Community Colleges</td>
<td>2-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of the Problem</td>
<td>4-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of the Problem</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population of Study</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose of Study</td>
<td>6-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction of Theoretical Approaches</td>
<td>7-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consequences of the Problem</td>
<td>8-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations of this Project</td>
<td>9-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definition of Technical Terms</td>
<td>10-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 2: Review of Literature</th>
<th>13-28</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summary of General Career Development</td>
<td>13-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of Literature</td>
<td>15-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems and Challenges to Typical Career Development of Focus Group</td>
<td>18-22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical Approaches which Meet the Career Development Issues of the Focus Group</td>
<td>22-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific Career Interventions to Meet the Needs of Re-Entry Adult Students</td>
<td>25-28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 3: Procedure (Justifying the Program)</th>
<th>29-38</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Logic of the Program</td>
<td>29-31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting a Theoretical Approach to this Program</td>
<td>31-34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Supporting Facilities, Materials, Resources &amp; Staff</td>
<td>34-35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Instruments</td>
<td>35-37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forms/Handouts</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedure</td>
<td>37-38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Program Goals and Sessions</td>
<td>38-40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 4: The Program</th>
<th>41-57</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Session 1: Intake Screening Interview 41-43
Session 2: Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) 43-45
Session 3: Strong Interest Inventory (SII) 45-47
Session 4: Clifton Strengths Finder 47-49
Session 5: Career Values Card Sort 49-51
Session 6: Job Search Processes 52-54
Session 7: Intervention Activity 54-55
Session 8: Career Planning Program or Portfolio Overview 55-57

Chapter 5: Project Evaluation 58-68

Project Evaluation Summary 58

Question One: To what degree does the career program offer self-understanding activities that allows the client to identify and cope with barriers?
   Evaluator One
   Evaluator Two 59

Question Two: To what degree does the career program meet the psychological needs of the population?
   Evaluator One
   Evaluator Two 59-60

Question Three: To what extent does the program contain activities that offer the client resources to help him or her connect to the world-of-work?
   Evaluator One
   Evaluator Two 61-62

Question Four: How effective is the career program goals’ aimed at increasing the client’s career development understanding?
   Evaluator One
   Evaluator Two 62-63

Question Five: How appropriate are the career assessments for this population?
   Evaluator One
   Evaluator Two 63-64

Question six: What are the strengths of the career program for this population?
   Evaluator One
   Evaluator Two 65

Question Seven: What suggestions or recommendations would you give to improve the career program?
   Evaluator One
   Evaluator Two 66-67

Conclusion 67-68
References: 69-75

Appendix A: “Client’s Intake Form” 76-78
Appendix B: “Knowing Self Exercise Handout” 79-80
Appendix C: “SII Party Exercise Handout” 81-82
Appendix D: “Clifton Strengths Finder Reflective Exercise Handout” 83-84
Appendix E: “Summary Sheet of Prioritized Values” 85
Appendix F: “Resume Writing Guide Handout” 86-87
Appendix G: “How to Write a Cover Letter Guide Handout” 88-90
Appendix H: “Informational Interview Guide Handout” 91-94
Appendix I: “Career Research Websites Handout” 95-97
Appendix J: “Intervention Exercise” 98-99
Appendix K: “Career Planning Portfolio Checklist” 100-01
Appendix L: “Project Evaluation Questions” 102
ABSTRACT

USING SELF-EFFICACY AS A GUIDE FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGE ADULT RE-ENTRY STUDENTS: STAYING EMPLOYABLE THROUGH CAREER PREPARATION

By

Jesus Gomez

Master of Science in Counseling, Career Counseling

This project explores self-efficacy, which includes career decision-making self-efficacy (CDMSE). CDMSE is individuals’ beliefs that they can successfully complete various tasks associated with career decision-making. For many nontraditional student clients, economic and social forces impact the career development process. In response to such forces, adult re-entry students can take practical steps to prepare for finding employment or when unemployment persists. There are significant career decision-making processes incurred by adult re-entry adult students that are not being addressed during their academic preparation planning. Many adult re-entry students are not receiving early intervention about the importance of conducting career exploration in relation to their academic preparation. In addition, seeking advice or conducting self-directive tasks at the start of the process can aid in the career development process. If assisted early on, these re-entry adult students can have meaningful and constructive career development planning. This intervention includes a portfolio, information compiled through a series of career counseling sessions, intended to cover knowing oneself, including one’s work attitudes, motivations, and skills. Furthermore, this
intervention can confirm their academic aspirations in preparation for future employment opportunities.
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Career development is no longer simply matching jobs to people who stay in the same occupation for 40 years or until retirement. Dramatic changes have taken place in the workplace and society. Career and adult development have converged, broadening the concept of career decision-making and career development to a recycling process that spans a lifetime. People now have multiple occupations and jobs in their lives. The economy has become global, corporations have restructured, and, in many occupations, robots have replaced workers (Rifkin, 1995).

Demographics in the work place have changed to include more women, multiple ethnicities, and workers with a desire to balance their time between work and family responsibilities (Hansen, 2001). The continuous changes in employment trends are partially due to consumer demands and innovations in technology. The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects the number of workers in education, health, professional careers, business, financial and informational services, leisure, hospitality, retail trades, transportation and utility occupations will increase by more than 10% by the year 2014 (United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2005).

Meanwhile, employment in manufacturing will decline by 1.5 million jobs. This decline is half of the 3 million manufacturing jobs lost in the previous decade (United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2006). Employment in goods-producing industries is expected to decrease from 14.9 to 13.1 percent of total employment (United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2007). The complex job market in the United States, the demand for workers with technical skills, and the ability to manage information, make
career decisions is more complex than ever. The community college is responding to this complex job market by providing open door access to higher education and job-training. Vocational programs that meet the employment demands of the local community have been shown to increase career mobility and the overall standard of living (Cohen & Brawer, 2003).

Changes in society and demographics, and the shift to a service providing workforce make career decision-making a lifetime challenge and, in turn, makes the role of the community college more important than ever before. Therefore, it is important to know the factors that influence career decision-making. The present project addresses the career decision-making self-efficacy and perceived career barriers of students enrolled in a college transfer program.

**Impact of Community Colleges**

Attending a community college can provide students with numerous career options. One of the missions of the community college is to provide vocational training and offer individuals options during economic downturns. In terms of education categories, the unemployment rates of women and men with college education show little difference during the recent recession to as compared with those without a college education (Grown & Tas, 2010). Enrollments in college of women, minorities and under-prepared students have also increased (Cohen & Brawer, 2003) in community college. Yet, these community college students are rarely studied as compared with students attending four-year colleges and universities. This is particularly salient given the high number of students attending community colleges versus four-year universities in California. The research about the experiences of students at the community college who
do transfer to senior institutions is necessary to determine the complexity of their adjustment process (Laanan, 2001), especially in the areas of how confident students are about their career choice and the perceptions they may have that keep them from making an informed career decisions.

When students enter college, particularly community college, they may or may not have definite career decisions made. Some enroll in general course work and expect to make a career decision later. Others believe they have decided on a definite career path and enroll in the major courses during their first semester or year in college (Laanan, 2003).

Vocational or applied technology education as defined by Cohen and Brawer (2003) is a term to describe education that teaches technical skills beyond what is traditionally taught in high schools and prepares students for entry into an occupation. This curricula is different from academic or college transfer curricula, according to Cohen and Brawer (2003), which include general education courses such as history, social science courses, foreign languages, as well as natural science and mathematics courses that fulfill academic requirements at a university.

Students who choose vocational or applied technology majors, as described by Bailey, Leinbach, Scott, Alfonso, Kienzl, and Kennedy (2004), are often interested in occupational certificate and degree programs that include, but are not limited to agriculture, business, communications, computer and information technology, engineering, health professions, home economics, mechanics, precision production, protective services, science technologies or transportation. According to Kasper (2002-
community colleges offer vocational training in an effort to train the workforce for their local communities.

Statement of the Problem

The issue being addressed in this project is adult re-entry students returning to academia to enhance their job marketability skills, more specifically, a comparison of vocational/technical community college students to academic/transfer community college students. The Bureau of Labor Statistics project occupations that typically need some type of postsecondary education for entry are projected to grow the fastest during the 2010-20 decade (United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012).

Career counselors and college student personnel professionals are urged to understand the kinds of challenges community college students encounter and how to assist in breaking and overcoming barriers. Dayton (2005) found students were surprisingly open in discussing their struggles, including strained finances, limited community college resources, limited English proficiency, uncertain transportation, a general fear of returning to school, and—most prominently—the struggle of balancing work, parenting, and school. These barriers can cause or hinder returning adults from returning to school to be re-trained, acquire new skills, and/or degree to return to the workforce.

While they struggle to manage their community college classes, these students need solutions to help them simultaneously find time to engage in career planning and exploration. The challenges these individuals encounter as less educated, adult re-entry students include decreasing job security, having a dearth of skills to compete for job opportunities in a competitive global job market, needing role models (i.e., mentors), and
requiring guidance to find alternative career pathways to influence their career decision-making process. Usually, these students select community colleges because of financial reasons (e.g., they can live at home and thus save money), because of the need for remedial study to make up for academic deficits, because they want to explore whether post-high school study is something they want to pursue, and for a variety of other reasons (Brown, 2007).

**Importance of the Problem**

The problem addressed for this project is that nontraditional student clients are inadequately prepared to enter the workforce after graduation. Many community colleges have career centers that do not possess the person power and resources to provide effective career counseling to adult returning students. Community colleges must foster among their adult returning student graduates the skills needed to enhance economic competitiveness. The economic state of the nation, the recession of 2007, according to Grown and Tas (2010) caused unemployment rates to rise for workers of all genders, races, and ethnicities (2010), which has resulted in, more competition for adult re-entry students who graduate and want to enter into the workforce.

This project begins with a description of the community college population in general, and examines career decision-making self-efficacy and perceived career barriers. Further, the demographic variables of gender, age, and ethnicity in the U.S., employment status, full and part-time student status of college transfer students are explored. A statement of the problem, the theoretical framework on which this project was based, the purpose of the project, significance of the problem, interventions to address the problems, definitions, and limitations of the project follow.
Population of Study

The characteristics associated with the group of foci are adult re-entry community college students ages 28 and older. Specifically, these adult re-entry students are seeking to find financial stability and self-reliance through the means of an education. In addition, these adult re-entry students returned to school, because of the changing job market conditions. This group often struggles with fear of returning to school, and more importantly, speak often of the disharmony in their lives stemming from competing commitments to children, partners, spouses, jobs, and self (Bauer & Mott, 1990). Therefore, this project will address how to assist re-entry adult community college students in transition to be oriented properly through career development planning while trying to keep balance with other life demands.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this project study is to provide adult re-entry students’ career intervention programs about their need for more training supporting the transition from community college enrollment to employment. This study addresses adult re-entry students who perceive that additional career counseling services would help them transition successfully into the world-of-work. Student clients’ perceptions about career counseling services will be discussed to identify factors that facilitate and impede students’ desires for career counseling services, possibly including career courses.

This project will also assist the student client in becoming aware of his or her career decision-making process at the community college setting. Identifying the variables that affect their career planning is needed in order to help guide them into the workforce, thus stimulating economic stability. The relationships between career
decision-making self-efficacy (CDMSE) and perceived career barriers can help the community college in adjusting programming.

Furthermore, such programming can include developing services that will raise students’ level of career decision making self-efficacy, helping them overcome perceived career barriers, assisting them in career decision-making, and ultimately helping them complete a degree, certificate or diploma. In addition to improving persistence at the institutional level, career counselors are equipped to help students achieve an awareness of the factors that contribute to career choice indecision and the role self-efficacy plays in career decision-making.

**Introduction of Theoretical Approaches**

The theories that support this project were based primarily on those of Taylor and Betz (1983) and Lent, Brown and Hackett (1994). The framework of Taylor and Betz based on Bandura’s (1977) self-efficacy theory and Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) of Lent et al. (1994) provided the theoretical framework for aiding the CDMSE and perceived career barriers of the applied technology and college transfer student groups.

Extending beyond career decision-making self-efficacy, Lent et al. (1994) developed a career development framework known as the social cognitive career theory (SCCT). This theory includes the concepts of both self-efficacy and career barriers. Theorists contend that the relationships of self-efficacy, satisfaction and stability to interests, abilities and expected outcomes are integral to career development. Outcomes within their theory can and do include barrier perceptions. They studied the processes by
which an individual develops interests, chooses a career based upon those interests, and how career choice performance outcomes are achieved.

While conceptualizing their framework, Lent et al. (1994) realized career development and academic development are related. They believe that the mechanisms that take place during career development also take place academically. These mechanisms are an application of their framework by describing how an individual with high self-efficacy in science avoids the arts and anticipates negative outcomes based on prior experiences or because of anticipated negative views from family or significant others. The authors posit that career interests develop from self-efficacy beliefs and those beliefs shape outcome expectations, which are influenced by barrier perceptions.

Thus, Lent et al.’s (1994) Social Cognitive Career Theory was an integral part of the foundational framework for this study. The SCCT includes three social cognitive factors: self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and goals. They define career development as a process by which individuals develop interests, make choices based upon those interests, and then act upon those choices resulting in specific outcomes. These initial interests can be forged in childhood and throughout life. Interests can be developed from activities that increase self-confidence or the level of self-efficacy. This leads to the anticipation of positive outcomes and a higher level of CDMSE.

**Consequences of the Problem**

Changing job markets over the past few decades have dramatically dropped the value of a high school diploma as the final educational level attained as companies turn to less expensive overseas labor. Effective technological advances and an increasing number of immigrants have contributed to the population competing for low-end work.
Jobs are available in mid-skilled sectors, but high school educated workers lack the training for this level of work (Dayton, 2005).

According to Plimmer & Schimdt (2007), an adult who returns to study may be attempting to break out of a sense of limited opportunities and restricted roles. Back in an education setting, adults may find their deeply held assumptions, beliefs, and expectations threatened. Older people in career transition often see themselves as having fewer psychological resources; they may experience more stress and may perceive more barriers to change than younger people do (Heppner, Multon, & Johnston, 1994).

**Limitations of this Project**

The primary limitation of this project is the difficulty gaining insight about the client’s ability to work independently, the impact of any family dysfunction, existing gender and cultural roles, and other areas that would inhibit goal attainment. The project will not directly address those areas. These limitations also include issues regarding the demographics of ethnicity, employment level while a student, first-generation college student status, and full and part-time student status that all may affect the career development planning process. If these variables are known earlier and receive interventions aimed to improve client’s emotional and psychological needs or self-efficacy, then community college re-entry adult students will be more focused and inclined to engage in the career development process while still in school.

Another limitation of this program is that it cannot resolve the client’s financial struggle to remain in community college, which ultimately affects their career-decision making process, thus having to find and take low-skills jobs to make a living or pay one’s way through college. Also, receiving financial aid assistance with the changes in recent
financial aid policy system has pressured college students to make decisions more quickly about their educational and career goals.

Finally, this career planning program is designed to help equip community college re-entry adult students to make a well-informed decision on their educational objective by deepening their self-understanding in relation to the world-of-work, strengthening their self-efficacy, and understanding the tools to find employment in a competitive job market after college graduation.

**Definition of Technical Terms**

Following are the definitions used for terms in this project:

*Non-traditional* according to Hardin (2008) “can include traditional-aged students who share common characteristics with their adult counterparts. These characteristics often put them at risk for being unsuccessful. Such characteristics include:” (p. 50).

- Delaying enrollment into higher education until adulthood
- Enrolling part-time
- Working full-time
- Being financially independent
- Being financially responsible for others
- Having family responsibilities
- Having academic deficiencies

*Career* refers to “the course of events which constitutes a life; the sequence of occupations and other life roles which combine to express one’s commitment to work in his or her total pattern of self-development” (as cited in Brown, 2007).
**Career Counseling** is a “service provided to a single client or group of clients who come seeking assistance with career choice or career adjustment problems” (Brown, 2007, p. 15)

**Career Development** is a “lifelong process involving psychological, sociological, educational, economic, and physical factors, as well as chance factors that interact to influence the career of the individual” (Brown, 2007, p. 14).

**Career Decision-Making Self-Efficacy (CDMSE)** is described as the extent to which individuals believe they can successfully complete various tasks associated with career decision-making (Taylor & Betz, 1983).

**Career Guidance** is a “broad construct that, like career intervention, encompasses most of the other strategies listed previously and has been used traditionally as the rubric under which all career development interventions were placed” (Brown, 2007, p. 14).

**Career Intervention** is a “deliberate act aimed at enhancing some aspect of a person’s career development, including influencing the career decision-making process (Brown, 2007, p. 14)

**Community College** is defined “as any institution regionally accredited to award the associates in arts or the associates in science as its highest degree” (Cohen & Brawer, 2003, p. 5).

**Self-efficacy** is an individual’s belief in his or her capabilities to successfully achieve a goal or an outcome and focuses on the importance of coping behaviors and how long they can be sustained in the face of obstacles (Bandura, 1977).

**Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT)** is a theory, which explores the relationship of self-efficacy, satisfaction and stability to interests, abilities and expected
outcomes. It includes the process of developing interests, choosing a career based upon those interests, and determining how performance outcomes are achieved based upon career choice (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994).

Summary

This first chapter of the project briefly discussed the relationship between CDMSE and the perceived career barriers among full and part-time applied technology and college transfer community college students. Taylor and Betz’s (1983) career decision-making self-efficacy theory based upon Bandura’s (1977) self-efficacy theory, and Lent et al.’s (1994) SCCT, both of which are significant theories that support the process of career decision-making, that therefore serve as the theoretical frameworks for this project. A more detailed discussion of these theories will be found in the next chapter. In this literature review chapter, CDMSE and perceived career barriers on community college students are highlighted. The sections that will be covered are: (a) summary of general career development, (b) review of literature, (c) problems and challenges to typical career development of adult re-entry students, (d) theoretical approaches which meet the career development issues of the focus group, and (f) specific career interventions to meet the needs of re-entry adult students.
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

General Introduction to the Literature Review

The review of literature is divided into five sections focusing on the growing need to help adult re-entry students prepare to transition into the workforce after graduation. The sections are: (a) summary of general career development, (b) review of literature, (c) problems and challenges to typical career development of focus group, (d) theoretical approaches which meet the career development issues of the focus group, and (f) specific career interventions to meet the needs of re-entry adult students.

Summary of General Career Development (SCCT)

The career developmental theory that will be formulated in designing career development practices will be Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT). SCCT (Lent, Brown, & Hacket, 1994) is based in part on Bandura’s (1986) social cognitive theory. This theory, emphasizes repeated activity involvement, modeling, and feedback from others. Further, an individual develops self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations for academic and career related tasks, in which both the environment and personal factors (e.g., socioeconomic status and personality traits) play an important role. Lent et al. (1994) posit that career interests develop from self-efficacy beliefs and those beliefs shape outcome expectations.

Lent et al. (1994) developed a career development framework known SCCT. This theory includes the concepts of both self-efficacy and career barriers. The theorists state that the relationships of self-efficacy, satisfaction and stability to interests, abilities and expected outcomes are integral to career development. Perceptions of barriers can impede career outcomes. Barriers or perceptions of barriers are preconceived ideas or
notions that he or she cannot perceive reality without basing it on his or her preconceived beliefs and past experiences.

Perceived barriers (Albert & Luzzo, 1999; Luzzo, 1993b, 1995, 1996; O’Leary, 1974; Ryan et al., 1996; Swanson & Woitke, 1997) have been researched and identified in the literature as having an effect on career decision-making. Swanson and Woitke (1997) defined career barriers as “events or conditions, either within the person or in his or her environment, that make career progress difficult” (p. 446). Their study examined perceived career barriers instead of actual barriers. The perception of a barrier, regardless of what the barrier actually is, has a great deal of influence on career decision-making. Swanson, Daniels and Tokar (1996) assessed the perceptions of career barriers and how individuals responded to the likelihood of a barrier, as well as how the barrier will hinder their career progress. The authors assessed perceptions of the likelihood of a barrier occurring, and if encountered, would it be a hindrance and ultimately overcome. They found that if perception barriers are discovered and be assisted to cope with it, the individual client has a chance to make career progress.

They argued for a process by which an individual develops interests, chooses a career based upon those interests, and how career choice performance outcomes are achieved. While conceptualizing their framework, Lent et al. (1994) realized career development and academic development are related. They believe the mechanisms that occur during career development also take place academically.

The authors posit that career interests develop from self-efficacy beliefs and those beliefs shape outcome expectations, which are influenced by barrier perceptions. Thus,
Lent et al.’s (1994) SCCT was an integral part of the foundational framework for this project. The SCCT includes three social cognitive factors: self-efficacy, outcome expectations and goals. They define career development as a process by which individuals develop interests, make choices based upon those interests, and then act upon those choices resulting in specific outcomes. These initial interests can be forged in childhood and throughout life. Interests can be developed from activities that increase self-confidence or the level of self-efficacy. This leads to the anticipation of positive outcomes and a higher level of CDMSE. The review of literature section will further discuss the relationship between CDMSE and perceived barriers, how it affects the career decision-making and what types of interventions exist to assist the individual client to make career development progress.

Review of Literature

Equal Access

Access to education has been the cornerstone of community colleges. According to Phelan (2000), the community college is the only choice for some students and a gateway to careers that previously seemed unattainable. Students have the option of the academic route by earning credits for transfer to a university, or to earn an applied technology degree that trains them for specific job skills. Students who would not necessarily consider college or who are academically unprepared or financially strapped or displaced because of job lay-offs have access to higher education due in large part to community colleges (Cohen & Brawer, 2003).

The community college has a rich history of providing access to post-secondary education and assistance with matching skills to occupations (Cohen & Brawer, 2003).
According to Cohen and Brawer (2003), the community college offers hope to many students, due to its more affordable tuition cost, close proximity to home, and equal access. Students at community colleges often not only aspire to earn four-year degrees, but they can also learn job skills and improve their job marketability.

According to Cohen and Brawer (2003), access is linked to location. In areas where a community college is located, the number of students who attend college increases dramatically. “During the 1950s and 1960s, whenever a community college was established in a locale where there had been no publicly supported college, the proportion of high school graduates in that area who began college immediately increased, sometimes by as much as 50%” (Cohen & Brawer, p. 16). The trend continues today because students are interested in the career options that lead to economic benefits that attendance at a community college can provide.

According to Grubb (2002), the occupational purpose of community colleges is central to their missions and serves students’ goals of enhancing career options by going directly into a career after graduation or by transferring to a four-year institution. He states, “those with some college earn 14% more among men and 17% more among women, suggesting that relative demand for pre-baccalaureate education has increased over the past three decades” (Grubb, 2002, p. 300). Thus, equal access has made a higher standard of living possible for many who attend community college.

One of the many missions of the community college is to provide students the opportunity to transfer to four-year institutions. As described by Kasper (2002-03), community colleges that have transfer agreements with four-year colleges and universities provide the first two years of coursework that will lead to a baccalaureate
degree. According to Dougherty and Kienzl (2006), use of the community college transfer function has increased. Universities are encouraging students to begin their postsecondary studies at the community college, due to their own increasing enrollments and costs. Research reports that the average baccalaureate degree recipient’s earnings are 30-40% more than the individuals with a terminal associate degree or certificate (Grubb, 2002). In a study of community college students’ career and educational goals, Laanan (2000) found that 25% of nonwhite and 33% of white students aspired to earn a baccalaureate degree. A third of both groups were planning to pursue the master’s degree. There were also students that set the doctorate as their highest degree and ultimate goal. Although many students have high aspirations, this diverse community college population, regardless of background, often arrives at the college with a need for career direction.

**Career Trends of Today**

Holt (2001) noted that new theories in career development emerged during the 1950s. Career education includes seven major goals: (a) to equip persons with general employment, adaptation, and promotion skills; (b) to help persons in their career awareness, exploration, and decision-making skills; (c) to relate education and work so that better choices of both can be made; (d) to make work a meaningful part of total lifestyle; (e) to reform education by infusing a careers emphasis in classrooms; (f) to promote and implement private sector-education system partnerships; and (g) to reduce bias and stereotyping and thus protect freedom of choice (Holt, 2001). Community colleges are the ideal place for many students to gain access to education and career
opportunities. Further, these opportunities can provide for an educated workforce to assist on both a local and global level.

Global economic demands and the changing labor market require more workers with post-secondary educations (American Association of Community Colleges, 2009). To increase the number of educated individuals in the United States, education access for first-generation college students and racial and ethnic minority students is needed; “community colleges play a particularly important role in adult education as they have often geared toward educating an older, working population” (U.S. Department of Commerce and others, 1999, p. 13). Community colleges provide community service and serve as an asset to society, because many students who attend a community college are from racial and ethnic minority groups, have working-class parents, and often are first-generation college students (Cohen & Brawer, 2003; Dougherty, 1987; Dowd, 2003; Levin, 2000).

Problems and Challenges to Typical Career Development of Focus Group

Career Decision-Making Barriers

Byars (1997) and Smith (2004) studied career barriers of university students and the degree to which these barriers hindered a student’s progress. They measured perceptions of potential career barriers, which included choosing a career, finding a job, performing a job and balancing a career with other aspects of life. They also used the two-step process of posing questions about the likelihood of the barrier happening and how much it would hinder career progress. The authors discussed the complexity involved with barriers and how ethnicity and gender can greatly influence a student’s ability to cope with perceived career barriers. They found that gender and race played a
significant role in an individual’s perception of career barriers, because women frequently encounter sexism and racial and ethnic minorities often encounter racism—additional barriers. Once again, perceptions of career barriers of 4-year university students were studied. Similar studies of 2-year community college students are needed.

Albert and Luzzo (1999) theorized that perceived barriers can be internalized by individuals and have an effect on the development of the individual’s skills, level of self-efficacy and outcome expectations. Internalized thoughts could lead to career options that seems unattainable. The client student will feel that his or her career goal has become more difficult to pursue, which contributes to his or her decline in confidence.

Some studies have explored CDMSE and the relationship between CDMSE and perceived barriers (Nauta & Kahn, 2007; Sandler, 2000; Taylor & Popma, 1990). Their studies of university students found those who possessed high levels of achievement (Nauta & Kahn, 2007) and high levels of CDMSE (Sandler; 2000; Taylor & Popma, 1990) were more decisive and more likely to overcome perceived barriers and persist in their studies. With these studies in mind, this project involves addressing the perceived career barriers of community college students and their career decision-making.

Although studies of first-generation college students—the first in their families to attend college (Pascarella, E., Pierson, C., Wolniak, G., & Terenzini, P., 2004)—and the influence of age on career decision-making exist at the university level, a paucity of literature concerning community college students exists. Whiston and Keller (2004) reviewed over thirty-nine studies on the influences of family background including first-generation college students’ status, which impacts the career development process. Only one of those studies was conducted using community college students. The results
revealed a difference between how men and women perceive family dysfunction as a predictor of CDMSE. These studies suggest identifying family background characteristics that may influence the career progress. To do so, this project provides an intervention activity that provides the student client the opportunity to explore variables affecting the career development process.

Other studies conducted over fifteen years ago compared the career needs of younger community college students to older community college students. Researchers found older students may be more mature, but they still have career development needs (Haviland & Mahaffy, 1985; Healy & Reilly, 1989; Luzzo, 1993a). In addition, Luzzo (1999) also studied nontraditional students, defined as over the age of 25, to see if their career development needs are much different than those of traditional age and found their needs to be similar. Therefore, in the design of this project, the client student will perform hands-on-activities that will enhance his or her self-understanding and acquire new information to assist with the career decision-making process.

Luzzo (1993a) also studied the differences in career decision-making of traditional compared to non-traditional students in a university setting and noted as they age, their decision-making becomes more mature. Furthermore, they define their needs more clearly. Luzzo (1993b) studied perceptions of barriers among undergraduate university students in relation to ethnicity and found differences in study skills, financial and ethnic identity perceptions. When the individual client receives constructive career intervention activities that promote expanding their self-awareness as part of the career development process, his or her perception of barriers will be negated.

Laanan (2000) examined ethnicity and community college students’
career and educational goals, attitudes and perceptions as they related to ethnicity. Laanan found nonwhite students were more influenced by external factors regarding their career and educational goals. The external factors were not specifically identified in the study. However, if nonwhite community college students make their decisions more fully on external factors a different type of counseling than traditional trait and factor is needed. That is the individual client will perform an intervention exercise to aid in understanding his or her barrier that limits the career development progress and receive assistance from the career counselor to find helpful resources to cope with the barrier.

**Family Origin Characteristics**

An analysis of studies, by Lent, Brown and Hackett (2000) of high school and college students in the areas of gender, ethnicity and family constraints, found perceptions of barriers played a significant role in decision-making; however, when these perceptions were measured, they showed only modest relationships to career decisions. Although modest relationships exist; there is a need for programs to address the relationships of CDMSE and perception of barriers in career decision-making. Furthermore, the application of these results to interventions with the community college population is needed to help the individual client find meaning in his or her relation to the world-of-work.

First-generation college students are those students whose parents did not earn a college degree (Pascarella, Pierson, Wolniak, & Terenzini, 2004). Their numbers are growing, especially at the community college level (Choy, 2001). Pascarella et al. (2004) found first-generation college students to be at a disadvantage compared to continuing-generation student peers. For instance, first-generation college students often are
employed, attend college part-time and are more likely to commute to school. Students who work and attend school part-time often have conflicting demands. The reasons why students work can be varied, yet can have an influence on their career decision-making ability, as well as their level of self-efficacy (Hammer, Grigsby, & Woods, 1998; Luzzo, McWhirter, & Hutcheson, 1997; Nonis & Hudson, 2006). Researchers, such as Luzzo and McWhirter (2001), have discussed the need for a comprehensive examination of self-efficacy and perceived career barriers among a diverse population; therefore, further study and application of CDMSE and perceived career barriers as they relate to gender, age, ethnicity, employment, first-generation college student, full and part-time student status is needed for college transfer community college students. It is important to continue offering practical hands-on-activities that will inspire and prepare the client to pursue his or her career aspiration.

**Theoretical Approaches which meet the Career Development Issues of the Focus Group**

**Career Decision-Making Approaches**

Bandura’s (1977) theory of self-efficacy is widely used as a foundation for behavioral studies, which include career decision-making (Betz, 2000; Betz & Hackett, 1981; Foltz & Luzzo, 1998; Peterson & delMas, 1996; Quimby & O’Brien, 2004; Ryan, Solberg, & Brown, 1996; Taylor & Betz, 1983; Tien, Lin & Chen, 2005; Zeldin & Pajares, 2000). Bandura’s (1977) theory focuses on self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is one’s personal belief that a course of action will lead to the mastery of a task or behavior. He asserted that self-efficacy is dynamic and can be developed. Bandura (1977) states, “cognitive processes play a prominent role in the acquisition and retention of new
behavior patterns” (p. 192). Bandura (1977) believes individuals high in self-efficacy will persist in an activity or move toward a goal such as earning a degree, even when the outcome is uncertain. Empowerment and self-leadership are also associated with self-efficacy. That is, self-efficacy has been supported by research that demonstrates that individuals with high levels of self-leadership and self-efficacy seek work that is enriching and enjoyable and ultimately perform their jobs better (Prussia, Anderson, & Manz, 1998).

After Bandura (1977) introduced the concept of self-efficacy, researchers began to study and apply it to career assessment and development. Betz and Hackett (1981) studied traditional and nontraditional career options for women and applied the theory of self-efficacy to a more specific process of career decision, calling it career decision-making self-efficacy (CDMSE). CDMSE “describes the extent to which individuals believe they can successfully complete various tasks associated with career decision making” (Taylor & Betz, 1983, p. 264). Taylor and Betz (1983) deduced that individuals with low levels of CDMSE experience challenges when making career decisions and are less confident about their vocational choice.

Betz and Hackett (1981) originally applied Bandura’s (1977) self-efficacy theory to career decision-making of women, and it quickly developed into a field of study for all college students. Zeldin and Pajares (2000) and Zeldin, Britner and Pajares (2007) found that men and women who possessed high levels of CDMSE showed more perseverance and resiliency when it came to overcoming academic and career obstacles. Research has shown gender and ethnicity to be key factors in CDMSE (Luzzo, 1995; Quimby & O’Brien, 2004; Rivera, Chen Flores, Blumerg & Ponterotto, 2007). For instance, gender
and race can greatly influence a student’s ability to cope with choosing a career, finding employment, performing a job, and balancing his or her career with other personal obligations.

**Student and Work Development**

Academic or college transfer students usually are working toward a baccalaureate degree and plan to transfer their community college credits to a four-year institution (Laanan, 2003). According to Bailey et al. (2004), vocational or applied technology students are less prepared academically and comprise 51% of the community college student population. They are more likely to be male, from a minority population, and older. They are typically economically disadvantaged and when compared to academic or college transfer students, are twice as likely to attend college to learn job skills (2004). Since, applied technology and college transfer students attend the same universities, community colleges serve as an ideal place to examine the differences and similarities between these two distinct groups of students.

The decisions that community college students make regarding their major, which may involve a college transfer route or an applied technology focus, ultimately affects their career choice. These choices are often influenced by cognitive motivational factors. One of these cognitive motivational factors is CDMSE, which has been shown to be influential when making career decisions. One important addition to the study of self-efficacy and its application to career development has been CDMSE, which describes the extent to which individuals believe they can successfully complete various tasks associated with career decision-making (Taylor & Betz, 1983). In order for community colleges to supply the job market with trained and educated workers, application of
interventions, which increase the CDMSE of community college students, is needed. That is, their self-efficacy in choosing a career path, as well as identifying perceived career barriers and participating in career intervention activities to help break barriers.

Specific Career Interventions to Meet the Needs of Re-Entry Adult Students

Characteristics of Difficulties with Decidedness

Before the individual client is considered to do the career program, the career counselor will evaluate the following: the first step is to identify the lack of readiness of the student client. This includes three categories of difficulty which precede engagement in making a specific career decision: (a) lack of motivation to engage in the career decision-making process, (b) general indecisiveness concerning all types of decisions, and (c) dysfunctional beliefs about career decision-making. The second step is to probe in finding from the student client his or her lack of information and inconsistent information, include categories of difficulties that may arise during the actual process of career decision-making. Lack of information includes four categories: (a) lack of knowledge about the steps involved in the process of the career decision-making, (b) lack of information about the self, (c) lack of information about the various occupations, and (d) lack of information about ways of obtaining additional information. Through various activities this career intervention program strives to help re-entry adult students learn about themselves, various occupations, his or her career values, interest, skills, and strengths. It includes identifying barriers via exercises that explore how clients may limit the career progress. The career counselor will guide the student client to find resources to cope with the barrier.

Career Intervention to Cope with Self-Efficacy
Self-efficacy as aforementioned, defined by Bandura (1977), is an individual’s belief in his or her capabilities to successfully achieve a goal or an outcome and focuses on the importance of coping behaviors and how long they can be sustained in the face of obstacles. Self-efficacy according to Bandura (1977) can greatly influence behavior. Further, he states that one’s self-efficacy may change depending on the situation. Thus, individuals with low self-efficacy may stop a difficult task if they believe they are unable to perform it well, if they are discouraged based on past performance or are simply overwhelmed by the task. However, individuals with high self-efficacy may pursue a task despite adversity. To assist the student client pursue a task, the individual client will perform individual tasks guided by the career counselor, where each task goal is clearly defined. After the student client has completed the task, he or she will have an opportunity to have an open discussing about his or her results from completing the task with the career counselor. The career counselor will support and provide positive feedback, thus helping the student client believe in his or her ability to complete goal oriented tasks.

One of the primary variables studied in career development research is CDMSE (Betz & Hackett, 2006; Nauta & Kahn, 2007; Peterson, 1993; Taylor & Betz, 1983; Taylor & Popma, 1990). CDMSE, according to Taylor and Betz (1983), is an application of the concept of self-efficacy and the confidence needed to make career decisions. Using the theory of self-efficacy, Taylor and Betz deduced that university students with low levels of self-efficacy experience challenges when it comes to making career decisions. In addition, students are less confident about their vocational choice. Their study revealed a negative relationship between CDMSE and career indecision. To assist the student
client’s career indecision, he or she will perform tasks that are oriented in discovering his or her values, interests, strengths, and skills that relates to the many occupations to the world-of-work.

Lent et al. (1994) suggest perceived barriers can have a strong influence on an individual’s career choice. Contextual factors are viewed as barriers and those barriers can inhibit career decision-making. According to Betz (2000), the approach toward, as well as the avoidance of, career decision-making has an effect on an individual’s attempt at educational majors and career exploration. Lent et al.’s (1994) theory of career development includes the concept of self-efficacy and, additionally, considers perceived career barriers. How career-related choices are developed and acted upon, together with performance outcomes, are part of Lent et al.’s (1994) career and academic interest framework. SCCT (Lent et al., 1994) takes self-efficacy one step further and asks, “Can I do this task?” and “If I do this task, what will occur?” Their theory focuses on an individual’s self-esteem and beliefs. Lent et al. (1994) also suggest career interests develop over time. Once the student client notices constructive results from performing career planning tasks, he or she will begin to understand on how to use the new information to strengthen their self-understanding. This prepares the student client to approach a task with a belief that he or she will obtain valuable information to assist him or her in the career decision making process.

Perceived career barriers can have an effect on career decision-making (Byars, 1997; Swanson et al., 1996). Swanson et al. (1996) in their study of perceived career barriers, used SCCT as a foundation for their research. They examined events that could be perceived as barriers to career decision-making including but not limited to, the birth
of a child, a job layoff or illness (Swanson et al., 1996). According to Albert and Luzzo (1999), there is an interaction between the three components of SCCT (self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and goal setting), and they do not occur in isolation. Career goals and outcomes are embodied within the context of an individual’s own environment and include barriers, perceived or real.

**Summary**

This second chapter of the project briefly discussed the career development theories in designing the career program. In addition, this project addressed the typical problems and challenges that affect the career decision-making of the client student; however, specific career interventions were created to help provide the client the tools to enhance his or her self-awareness and confidence to relate to the world-of-work. The following chapter will provide a general overview of the career program goals and intervention activities that aid in increasing the client’s self-efficacy and career decision-making.
CHAPTER THREE: PROCEDURE

Logic of the Program

This career counseling program or “portfolio,” is designed for adult re-entry students needing early career planning intervention, before he or she takes college coursework that is tailored to his or her educational and/or career goals. The goal is to properly orient the client student explore and discover his or her abilities, strengths, skills, and interests to strengthen their capability beliefs and diminish barriers. The career counseling program process will consist of eight total sessions concluding with an overall evaluation of the individual’s career planning progress. Further, instruction on how the individual can apply the results to work will be provided.

The career planning portfolio includes the successful completion of eight sessions. These sessions will serve to increase their understanding of self, work skills, and career decision-making. Thus, increasing their CDMSE and ability to limit, or more fully diminish perceived barriers. The program will assist them to reflect on how they can relate themselves to the world-of-work and discover their motivation in planning career and academic goals. The career planning program will enhance re-entry adult students’ knowledge of what special/transferable skills are important to them. Further students will be able to identify and explain their natural capabilities and aptitudes in a variety of situations.

Before the returning adult student determines what college courses to take oriented towards their academic goal, he or she will complete a series of career planning sessions. These sessions begin with an intake screening interview to evaluate their personal history, work experience, interest, skills and natural abilities. This meeting will
take an hour. During the meeting, the counselor will explain the career planning portfolio process to the client and provide them the opportunity to address any barriers that will hinder in completing the career planning program in a timely manner.

In the next step, the guidance career counselor will instruct him or her to do the next four sessions as part of the career planning portfolio in taking assessments such as the Myers Briggs Test Indicator (MBTI; Briggs, Myers, McCaulley, Quenk, & Hammer, n.d), Strong Interest Inventory (SII; Strong, Campbell, & Hansen, n.d), Strengths Finder (Rath, 2007), and by completing an activity using the Career Values Card (Knowdell, 1998). The guidance career counselor will provide instructions for each session, each taking between an hour-to-two hours to complete. Each assessment will be taken within three days from when the assessment was issued.

According to Krumboltz and Vidalakis (2000), in the hands of a skillful counselor, career assessment instruments can be used to assess skills that can be learned. How it helps is it improves the client’s self-understanding such as his or her attitudes, behavior, values, and strengths. Then, the career counselor can aid the client in developing interests that can be developed, beliefs that need to be challenged, work habits that need to be revised, and personality characteristics that can be modified.

The final two sessions of the career program will focus on resume writing, how to write a cover letter, discuss what is an informational interview, and perform self-directed career exploration online. In these final steps, the client will aim to diminish barriers to achieve CDMSE, thus paving the way in determining their academic study of interest. This all will in turn lead them to future employment opportunities.
In facilitating this career planning program, it is highly recommended that the individual has a Master’s degree in counseling with a specialization in career counseling. However, help can be provided by a graduate student currently enrolled in a master’s counseling degree program, which he or she is in their second year of study supervised by their graduate program coordinator and a counselor at the community college.

Connecting A Theoretical Approach to this Program

The foundational theory for this project is SCCT. SCCT examines cognitive thought processes, self-efficacy, and setting personal goals as well as environmental variables such as the atmosphere in which one grows up. The types of learning experiences or role models influence how these variables interact with behavior variables. Lent et al.’s (1994) theory hypothesizes that all three variables are linked and have reciprocal effects on each other. They believe that personal, contextual and experiential factors work together to shape self-efficacy, outcome expectations and goals. According to Brown (2007), the central propositions of social cognitive theory are as follows:

1. The interaction between people and their environments is highly dynamic; the result is that individuals are at once influenced by and cause influence on their environment;
2. Career-related behavior is influenced by four aspects of the person; behavior, self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations, and goals, in addition to genetically determined characteristics;
3. Self-efficacy beliefs and expectations of outcomes interact directly to influence interest development;
4. Gender, race, physical health, disabilities, and environmental variables influence self-efficacy development, as well as expectations of outcomes and, ultimately, goals and performance;
5. Actual career choice and implementation and
implementation are influenced by a number of direct and indirect variables other than self-efficacy, expectations of outcomes, and goals; (6) Performance in educational activities and occupations is the result of the interactions among ability, self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations, and the goals that have been established (p. 69).

To assist the individual client to perform new set of tasks to process new information in an attempt to learn more about themselves, he or she will take assessments that focus on his or her skills, values, attitudes, beliefs, and interests.

Holland’s theory of vocational choice applies to the group being study in this project where personality characteristics must merge with the appropriate social and/or work environment to influence individuals’ productivity and self-growth. This theory will be utilized to augment SCCT. That is, Holland’s theory is not a focus of this project, but will be used to help clients explore their interests. In using this theory, it is important that it can be applied when the client takes the Strong Interest Inventory (SII; Strong, Campbell, & Hansen, n.d). This assessment can provide information about career interests and work environments, so he or she will have a better understanding what to look for in making their career choices.

There are six personality interest types. According to Brown (2007), Realistic people deal with the environment in an objective, concrete, and physically manipulative manner. They avoid goals and tasks that demand subjectivity, intellectual or artistic expressions, or social abilities. They prefer agricultural, technical, skilled-trade, and engineering vocations. Investigative people deal with the environment by using intellect—manipulating ideas, works, and symbols. They prefer scientific vocations,
theoretical tasks, reading, collecting, algebra, foreign languages, and such creative activities as art, music, and sculpture. They achieve primarily in academic and scientific areas and usually do poorly as leaders. Artistic individuals deal with the environment by creating art forms and products. They rely on subjective impressions and fantasies in seeking solutions to problems. They prefer musical, artistic, literary, and dramatic vocations and activities that are creative in nature. Social people deal with the environment by using skills to interact with and relate to others. They are typified by social skills and the need for social interactions. They prefer educational, therapeutic, and religious vocations and activities, such as church, government, community services, music, reading, and dramatics. Enterprising people cope with the environment by expressing adventurous, dominant, enthusiastic, and impulsive qualities. Characterized as persuasive, verbal, extroverted, self-accepting, self-confident, aggressive, and exhibitionistic, they prefer sales, supervisory, and leadership vocations and activities that satisfy needs for dominance, verbal expression, recognition, and power. Conventional people deal with the environment by choosing goals and activities that carry social approval. Their approach to problem is stereotypical, correct, and unoriginal. They create a neat, sociable, conservative impression. They prefer clerical and computational tasks, identify with business, and place a high value on economic matters. To further expand learning about his or her preference type personality, the student client will take the second of three assessments he or she will be taking.

With the MBTI, it is based on Jung’s 1923 theory of psychological types. According to Briggs, Myers, McCaulley, Quenk, & Hammer (n.d), the MBTI provides scores on four dichotomous scales: Extraversion-Introversion (EI), Sensing-Intuition
(SN), Thinking-Feeling (TF), and Judging-Perceiving (JP). The various combinations of these four scales result in 16 possible personality types, each represented by a four-letter code indicating the preference for each of the dichotomies (e.g., ESTJ, INFP). To assist the student client strengthen his or her capability beliefs, he or she will take an additional assessment to further their self-growth.

Finally, the student client will take the Strengths Finder assessment. According to Linley and Joseph (In press), strengths-based ideology provides insight for the design of intervention programs that prompt individuals toward achieving positive goals and aims (Frey, Jonas, & Greitemeyer, 2003). As a strengths-based perspective can produce “the ability to flexibly apply as many different resources and skills as are necessary to solve a problem or work toward a goal” (Aspinwall & Staudinger, 2003, p. 13) by helping people consider the personal resources they can mobilize to achieve favorable ends. The career counselor can guide the client to recognize and how to apply his or her strengths to help improve personal, academic, and career development. The client student can use his or her strengths to have more meaningful, effective, positive, and constructive behavioral outcomes.

List of Supporting Facilities, Materials, Resources, and Staff

- Career counselor
- Career counselor assistant (graduate student in counseling program)
- Two private offices
- Computer lab of 17 computers with Internet, Office, and EUREKA access
- Career resources book shelf
- Portable projector
• Portable projector screen
• 2 round tables
• 17 chairs
• Telephone lines
• Multi-use copier, printing, and faxing machine
• File cabinets to store clients’ confidential files
• Resume paper
• Printing paper supply
• Pens/pencils
• Manila folders
• Pocket folders for clients
• Access codes for assessments (MBTI, SII, & Clifton Strengths Finder)

Assessment Instruments

• The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI; Briggs, Myers, McCaulley, Quenk, & Hammer, n.d) is a formal assessment tool, which assesses personality traits in relation to individuals’ attitudes, judgments, and perception. According to Brown (2007), the personality profile resulting from the Myers-Briggs consists of the highest scores on Introversion versus Extroversion, Sensing versus Intuition, Thinking versus Feeling, and Judging versus Perceiving. According to Briggs, Myers, McCaulley, Quenk, & Hammer (n.d), each four-letter type represents a complex set of relationships among the functions (e.g., S, N, T, and F), attitudes (E and I), and attitudes toward the outer world (J and P). The individual client can use the assessment results to guide him or her in determining work
environment preferences. This assessment instrument is appropriate for the target population as it offers the client student gain valuable insight about his or her learning processes.

- The Strong Interest Inventory (SII; Strong, Campbell, & Hansen, n.d.) is a formal assessment tool, which assesses personality interest type to help match to possible occupational choices and environments. At the conclusion of completing the assessment, the individual client will receive his or her three-letter personality interest code. According to Brown (2007), the primary (first type) is expected to be the most influential, the second type the second most influential, and the tertiary or third type the third most influential in describing vocational decisions and aspirations and academic achievement. This assessment instrument is appropriate for the target population as it offers the client student the opportunity to discover his or her interests and use the information to apply it towards his or her career decision-making.

- The Clifton Strengths Finder is a formal assessment tool, which assesses the individual’s strengths or growth potential using the results. According to Rath (2007), in 1998 The Gallup Organization designed a Web-based assessment called the StrengthsFinder (available at http://www.strengthsfinder.com) to assist in the talent discovery process by measuring the predictability of patterns of behavior within individuals. The StrengthsFinder presents individuals with pairs of statements, sorts the responses, and presents the results back in the form of dominant patterns of behavior, or themes of talent. Thirty-four themes of talent have been identified to capture prevalent patterns of behavior recognized through
Gallup’s study of excellence. Once clients have taken the assessment, he or she discovers their top five themes. The results of the strengths-based assessment will assist the individual client to focus more on using his or her strengths to realize full potential and be more productivity in his or her academic and/or career pursuits.

**Forms/Handouts**

- Appendix A: Client’s Intake Form
- Appendix B: MBTI Handout
- Appendix C: SII Party Exercise Handout
- Appendix D: Clifton Strengths Finder Reflective Exercise Handout
- Appendix E: Summary Sheet of Prioritized Values
- Appendix F: Resume Writing Guide Handout
- Appendix G: How to Write a Cover Letter Guide Handout
- Appendix H: Informational Interview Guide Handout
- Appendix I: Career Research Websites Handout
- Appendix J: Intervention Exercise
- Appendix K: Career Planning Portfolio Checklist

**Procedures**

The career planning program is designed for nontraditional client students returning to school at the community college level. Different on-campus departments such as Financial Aid Office, Admissions and Records, Student Support Services programs, and/or word of mouth will refer students. The career planning portfolio
consists of eight sessions where the sessions last between one- to-two hours and a half and must be completed within a two-week period.

In addition, the individual responsible in working with the potential clients is the counselor who possesses a master’s degree in counseling, preferably with an emphasis in career counseling. The career counselor will have a minimum of two years of experience working with the population of this project. The career counselor will be assisted by a graduate student intern. The intern is concurrently attending full-time at an university to obtain a master’s degree in counseling with a specialization in career counseling.

The career counselor will conduct an intake-screening interview. The career counselor will determine the appropriateness of the client for the career planning program. Once the client has been determined to be an appropriate fit to participate in the career planning program, he or she will begin participating in the required sessions to take assessments, and receive interpretations to deepen understandings of the self. Then, participants will partake in exercises to compliment the assessments and enhance the learning experience that will assist to clarify personal characteristics such as skills, abilities, and interests. The career planning portfolio will culminate with the clients performing self-directed tasks where the clients bring the information together and applies it in his or her educational and/or career decision goals.

**General Program Goals and Sessions**

Goals established for this career planning program are:

1. Conducting an intake-screening interview will help the career counselor determine whether or not the client will be a good fit to do the career planning portfolio.
2. The individual client will take the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) assessment to obtain from the results a four-letter personality preference type profile. The client will do an exercise to compliment in understanding how to apply in knowing self.

3. The individual client will take the Strong Interest Inventory (SII) assessment to obtain from the results a one-to-three-letter personality interests or theme code. The client will use the theme codes to search for compatible occupations matching personality interests.

4. The individual client will take the Clifton Strengths Finder assessment to obtain from the results of the top five strengths-based themes. The client will do an exercise to become more aware how to apply and focus on strengths rather than on the weaknesses.

5. The individual client will do a Career Value Card Sort activity to raise his or her awareness in understanding the values that are important to him or her in the world-of-work.

6. The individual client will be proactive in the job search processes such as knowing how to do a résumé, cover letter, informational interview, and career research exploration. This will serve to integrate the career information to help the client make well-informed decisions about his or her career and/or major of study interest.

7. The individual client will participate in an exercise to help identify and discuss the barrier(s) with the career counselor that prevents him or her from
pursuing his or her dream career. This also will be an opportunity to gain self-efficacy.

8. The individual client will bring the career information together and share the results with the career counselor satisfying the completion of the career planning portfolio. In conclusion, the client has constructive plans about his career and educational pursuit goals.
CHAPTER FOUR: THE PROGRAM

An in-depth description of the entire program is included in the appendices.

Below are the overarching goals of the program:

Session 1

(Individual Session)

*Topic*: Intake Screening Interview

*Time*: 1 hour

*Goal*: The first session goal is to obtain as much information as possible with the individual during a formal intake screening interview to learn about their personal background including their employment history, family background, education level, interests, challenges in college, and identify areas of concern. Then, the career counselor will discern whether or not the client is an appropriate fit for this career counseling program. A client’s intake screening form (Appendix A) will be used to record information obtained from the client.

*Behavioral objectives:*

- The goal is for the individual to voluntarily seek out assistance and participate/ cooperate by disclosing all relevant personal information that will be helpful during the career counseling process. The career and/or guidance counselor will be explaining to the individual about what each module consists of and why it is important to complete the career counseling process, which is ultimately to develop a career planning portfolio.

- The client will complete a series of assessments in session 2-5, which includes
a career values card sort activity to assist him or her in the career development process and serve to deepen discussion of self-understanding. Then, in sessions 6-7, the client will apply the new information acquired for use in the job search processes in order to create and prepare a résume and cover letter relevant for his or her goal, know what an informational interview is and conduct one, where to go to do career research exploration online, and to complete an exercise to cope with a perceived barrier. The program will conclude with session 8, where the client and the career counselor will review the progress of the career planning program or “portfolio” using a checklist (Appendix K).

- The client admitted to the program will have consent and commit to two weeks to participate from beginning to end in the career counseling program. The time that the client will need to devote to successfully complete all modules of the career program is between 10-15 hours. Doing so will allow the clients to gain valuable information related to the career and/or educational decision making processes.

Materials:

1. Client’s Intake Screening Form: Appendix A
2. Career Planning Portfolio Checklist: Appendix K
3. Portfolio: Provided by program or purchased by client

Sequence of activities:

1. The client will be on time to their scheduled intake screening interview appointment with the career counselor. The client will introduce themselves, and the career counselor will explain the objective of the intake-screening interview. The intake-screening interview is designed to assess the participant’s potential of doing the career
counseling program. The client will be informed at that time if the student is a good fit to move forward in participating in this program.

2. The career counselor provides detailed information on completing each module within a two-week period. The career counselor will issue a portfolio checklist to help the client keep track of the modules to be completed.

Session 2

(Individual Session)

*Topic:* Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) personality type assessment

*Time:* 2 hours

*Goal:* The second session goal is to have the individual client complete the MBTI personality assessment, so that the individual has a personality rubric to help them reflect on understanding his or her own behaviors, attitudes, actions, and decision-making process.

*Behavioral Objectives:*

- After successfully completing the assessment, the client will discuss the results with the counselor. This will assist the client in highlighting information about his or her personality that will be valuable to the career counseling process.

- The client will explain how the personality type results from the MBTI best represent him or her using the handout (Appendix B). This handout will be provided by the career counselor and the client will retain it and use it for reference.

*Materials:*

1. Access to a computer within the career center.

2. “Knowing Self Exercise” handout: Appendix B
3. Writing tool

Sequence of Activities:

Instructions: (20 minutes)

1. The client will arrive on time for their appointment to meet with the career counselor to receive instructions on taking the MBTI personality assessment.

2. The career counselor will issue an MBTI access code to the client to complete the assessment. The client will sign a form to acknowledge that an access code has been granted. The access code will be provided by the career counselor. The client will be able to complete the MBTI at no cost to her or him.

3. The career counselor will locate an available computer in the program center for the client to take the assessment online and in an area where he or she won’t have any distractions.

4. The career counselor will give the client the “Knowing Self Exercise” handout (Appendix B). The career counselor will print the results for the MBTI.

Taking the assessment: (30-45 minutes)

5. The client will complete the MBTI personality assessment without interruptions. He or she will notify the career counselor upon the completion of the assessment.

Discuss assessment results: (30-55 minutes)

6. The career counselor will print the results for the MBTI. The client will discuss with the career counselor his or her thoughts on taking the personality assessment. This can include an opportunity to disclose concerns that occurred during the process.
7. The client will discuss the assessment results with the career counselor and reflect how his or her personality type is applied in understanding oneself. The client will use the “Knowing Self Exercise” handout (Appendix B) to be able to clarify why his or her personality type fits in describing themselves.

**Session 3**  
**Individual Session**

*Topic:* Strong Interest Inventory (SII) assessment

*Time:* 2 hours

*Goal:* The third session goal is for the individual client to take the SII or another personality type assessment in order to obtain their Holland code. The SII is a formal validated assessment tool, which assesses the individual’s interests that match potential occupations and occupational environments.

*Behavioral Objectives:*

- The behavioral goal is for the individual to complete the inventory and learn about their personality type/interests and how they can use their results when researching possible occupations in the world-of-work. The more informed individual can then select occupational environments that will be congruent with his or her personality traits.

- The client will complete the “SII Party Exercise” handout (Appendix C) to visualize and evaluate how their personality type/interests applies to the possible environment they find where he or she operates the best.

*Materials:*

1. Access to a computer from the career center.

2. “SII Party Exercise” handout: Appendix C
3. Writing tool

Sequence of Activities:

Instructions: (20 minutes)

1. The client will arrive on time for their appointment to meet with the career counselor to receive instructions on taking the SII personality interests assessment.

2. The career counselor will issue an SII access code to the client to take the assessment. The client will sign a form to acknowledge that an access code has been granted.

3. The career counselor will locate an available computer in the program center for the client to take the assessment online. A low distraction area will be provided.

Completing the assessment: (25-35 minutes)

4. The client will complete the SII personality assessment without interruption. He or she will notify the career counselor upon the completion of the assessment.

Activity after completing the assessment: (30-35 minutes)

5. The career counselor will print the results for the SII and give the client the “SII Party Exercise” handout (Appendix C) to apply the assessment results. By completing the activity, the client will identify the environment in which he or she feels the most comfortable, how his or her personality type/interests fits with his or her career interest, and what occupations based on the SII assessment results are related to his or her interests.

Discuss assessment results & activity: (30 minutes)

6. The client will collaborate with the career counselor to share his or her
thoughts on taking the personality type/interests assessment concluding it with the activity using the “SII Party Exercise” handout (Appendix C). This can include an opportunity to disclose concerns during the process.

7. The client will share his or her internal thought processes on their behavior, attitude, and interests towards certain desired job settings.

**Session 4**

*(Individual Session)*

*Topic:* Clifton Strengths Finder assessment

*Time:* 2-2 1/2 hours

*Goal:* The fourth session goal is for the individual client to take the Clifton Strengths Finder assessment (Rath, 2007) and learn about their distinguished personal attribute or strength themes that help them be successful.

*Behavioral Objectives:*

- The client will complete the Clifton Strengths Finder assessment and will learn about his or her top five strengths-based themes and how he or she can integrate the themes to maximize one’s potential and productivity.

- The client will complete the “Clifton Strengths Finder Reflective Exercise” handout (Appendix D) to reflect on each of his or her five themes.

- The client will identify at least one perceived barrier by doing a reflective exercise.

- Using one or two of their strengths-based themes in order to cope with this barrier that prevents him or her from progressing in his or her personal life or academic studies, the client will first identify what his or her barriers are. Then, the student client
will express to the career counselor how he or she will approach in diminishing the barrier.

*Materials:*

1. Access to a computer from the career center.
2. “Clifton StrengthsFinder Reflective Exercise” handout: Appendix D
3. Writing tool

*Sequence of Activities:*

*Instructions: (20 minutes)*

1. The client will arrive on time for their appointment to meet with the career counselor to receive instructions on taking the Clifton StrengthsFinder assessment.
2. The career counselor will issue a strengths-based assessment access code to the client to take the assessment. The client will sign a form to acknowledge that an access code has been granted.
3. The career counselor will locate an available computer in the program center for the client to take the assessment online. The setting will be sufficiently quiet for the client to work undisturbed.

*Completing the StrengthsFinder assessment: (30-45 minutes)*

4. The client will complete the StrengthsFinder assessment without interruptions. He or she will notify the career counselor upon the completion of the assessment.

*Activity after completing the assessment: (30-45 minutes)*

5. The client will print the results for the Clifton StrengthsFinder and receive
from the counselor the “Clifton StrengthsFinder Reflective Exercise” handout (Appendix D) to apply his or her assessment results. The client will use the assessment results in order to extract relevant key phrases or statements that resonate with him or her for each strengths-based theme.

6. The client will use the key phrases or statements of each strengths theme to reflect on and use it to remove barriers that are impeding his or her mobility positively. The client must at least identify one barrier he or she can eliminate realistically to make progress.

*Discuss assessment results & activity: (30-40 minutes)*

7. The client will collaborate with the career counselor to share his or her thoughts on taking the strengths-based assessment. This will conclude with an activity using the “Clifton StrengthsFinder Reflective Exercise” handout (Appendix D). This will include an opportunity to disclose concerns during the process.

**Session 5**

*(Individual Session)*

*Topic:* Career Values card sort

*Time:* 1-1/2 hours

*Goal:* The fifth session goal is for the individual client to complete the CareerValues card sort (Knowdell, 1998). This will allow the individual to prioritize and understand what he or she wants in a career in the world-of-work.

*Behavioral Objectives:*

- The behavioral goal is for the client to sort the forty-one career values cards
into the appropriate column headings (“Always Valued,” “Often Values,” etc.) and he or she needs in order to make sure that the “Always Valued” category should have no more than eight cards included.

- The client will prioritize the career values for all column categories by placing the value he or she feels most strongly about at the top and arranging the rest in decreasing order of importance.

**Materials:**

1. Clean and open space area desk
2. “Summary Sheet of Prioritized Values” (Knowdell, 1998) sheet (Appendix E)
3. Writing tool
4. Career Values card sort that consist of forty-one career values and five categorical headings (Always Valued, Often Valued, Sometimes Valued, Seldom Valued, and Never Valued).

**Sequence of Activities:**

**Instructions:** (20 minutes)

1. The client will arrive on time for his or her appointment to meet with the career counselor to receive instructions on completing the Career Values card sort activity.

2. The career counselor will issue forty-one career values and five category headings cards.

3. The career counselor will locate an open space desk area for the client to work.

4. The counselor will issue the “Summary Sheet of Prioritized Values” handout:
Appendix E. Once again, the counselor will remind the client to record activity results on the handout.

*Card Sort Activity: (35-40 minutes)*

5. The client will arrange the following card headings from left to right: “Always Valued,” “Often Valued,” “Sometimes Valued,” “Seldom Valued,” and “Never Valued.”

6. The client will read the forty-one career values cards and subsequently lay out the cards in the appropriate column heading. The “Always Valued” category should have no more than eight cards in it.

7. Once the client has laid out the cards, he or she will prioritize their cards within each category, putting the value he or she values the most strongly about at the top and arranging the rest in decreasing order of importance.

8. Once the client has completed sorting the cards, he or she will record the results into the “Summary Sheet of Prioritized Values” handout (Appendix E) issued by the counselor.

9. The client will evaluate his or her top eight career values selected and determine how they can be applied in relation to their career decision-making process.

*Discuss activity results: (30 minutes)*

10. The client will discuss with the career counselor his or her thoughts on completing the Career Values card sort activity and go over the results recorded on the “Summary Sheet of Prioritized Values” handout (Appendix E) to further deepen his or her meaning using the “Always Valued” choices. Also, the client will explore how the values can be used in his or her personal life. This can include an opportunity to disclose concerns during the process.
Session 6

(Individual Session)

*Topic:* Job Search Processes

*Time:* Varies

*Goal:* The sixth session goal is for the career counselor to show how the individual client will implement the information obtained from the modules by creating a résumé and cover letter in a relevant format for his or her goal, learn what an informational interview is and conduct one, and know where to do self-directed research/exploration approaches in order to prepare for his or her program completion and graduation. Accordingly, he or she will have the greater knowledge and more tools to find and attain employment.

*Behavioral Objectives:*

- The behavioral goal is for the client to read and understand guides on résumé and cover letter writing. By using these guides and including them in his or her portfolio, the individual client will be able to create/prepare a résumé and cover letter using a word processor for employment purposes. In addition, the client will read and understand what an informational interview means using the guide handout (Appendix H) provided.

- The client will do self-directed career research exploration by visiting several websites listed on the handout (Appendix I) to learn about job occupations matching his or her interests, skills, and values.

- The client will conduct an informational interview.

*Materials:*

1. “Résumé Writing Guide” handout: Appendix F
2. “How to Write a Cover Letter Guide” handout: Appendix G
3. “Informational Interview Guide” handout: Appendix H
4. “Career Research Websites” handout: Appendix I
5. Access to a computer in the career center
6. Writing tool

Sequence of Activities:

Instructions: (20 minutes)

1. The client will arrive on time for their appointment to meet with the career counselor to discuss final steps in completing the career planning portfolio.

2. The client will receive the handout guides (Appendixes F, G, H, and I) to begin performing the job search processes.

Action-Oriented: (time varies for each task)

3. The client will read and understand the résume writing, how to write a cover letter, and informational interview guide handout (Appendixes F, G, & H) to either update or create a résume, do a sample cover letter, and familiarize with doing an informational interview.

4. The client will use the “Career Research Websites“ handout (Appendix I) to explore various occupational information, academic majors, and other relevant information to help with the career decision-making.

5. After the client has done extensive career research, he or she will identify an occupation of interest. Then, find an employer that offers such occupation and contact the employer to request an opportunity to conduct an informational interview with him or her.
6. The client will ask the career counselor’s staff (as relevant) to review and critique his or her résumé and/or cover letter to ensure he or she has completed it properly.

**Session 7**

(Individual Session)

**Topic:** Intervention Activity

**Time:** 1 hour

**Goal:** The seventh session goal is for the client to identify at least one barrier that he or she is facing via an exercise to cope with such barrier. The client will be able to recognize what prevents him or her from achieving his or her career and/or educational aspirations.

**Behavioral Objectives:**

- The behavioral goal is for the individual client to complete a written handout exercise (Appendix J) that lists barriers that he or she possibly is facing. If the client’s barrier is listed, he or she will indicate it on the hand-out and write a brief statement what he or she has attempted to do to cope with the barrier. If it is not listed, then the client will write down the barrier he or she is facing.

- The client will have an open discussion with the career counselor on the barrier(s) and how he or she has attempted to manage it or them. The career counselor may offer suggestions and/or resource information to assist the client in coping with the barrier(s).

**Materials:**

1. “Intervention Exercise” handout: Appendix J
2. Clipboard
3. Writing tool

*Sequence of Activities:*

*Instructions: (15 minutes)*

1. The client will arrive on time for their appointment to meet with the career counselor to receive instructions on doing the “Intervention Exercise” (Appendix J).
2. The counselor will provide the handout exercise with a clipboard to write on and a writing tool, so that the client completes the handout.

*Discussion: (45 minutes)*

3. The individual client will share with the career counselor the information on the exercise that he or she completed. The client will elaborate how the barrier(s) impacts his or her career decision-making. In addition, the client will be able to explain his or her approach in trying to eliminate the barrier.
4. After the career counselor has received disclosure from the client about his or her barrier(s), the career counselor will offer suggestions and/or resource information that will assist him or her to eliminate such barrier(s). These suggestions include explore how their strengths from Strengths Quest could help minimize the impact of barriers.

**Session 8**

*(Individual Session)*

*Topic: Career Planning Program or “Portfolio” Overview*

*Time: 1 hour*

*Goal: The eighth session goal is for the client to gather the information from the*
previous seven sessions that completes the career planning portfolio. The career planning portfolio consists of the client’s MBTI, SII, Clifton’s Strengths Finder, and Career Values Card Sort results. In addition, the client has created and/or updated his or her résumé, has a sample cover letter, has completed one informational interview, has conducted personalized career exploration research, and has identified situational barriers that her or she has addressed or is addressing that will (eventually) no longer prevent him or her from pursuing his or her career goal. A career planning portfolio checklist combines the results of the various instruments is provided in Appendix K. The career planning information will be used to apply it to his or her academic preparation aspiration.

*Behavioral Objectives:*

- The behavioral goal is for the individual client to update the career counselor his or her progress in completing tasks as part of the career planning portfolio.
- The client will use the new acquired information to determine academic major interest that will lead to obtain his or her desired career goal.

*Materials:*

1. Career Planning Portfolio checklist handout: Appendix K
2. Sample Cover Letter
3. Updated or created résumé
4. Occupational information obtained from “Career Research Website” handout: Appendix I

*Client and Career Counselor Dialogue: (1 hour)*

1. The individual client will share with the counselor an overall understanding of
each module and how each fits in clarifying the career development process. These include an understanding of his or her skills, abilities, strengths, and interests.

2. The individual client will debrief his or her informational interview experience with the career counselor and share what they found valuable from the exposure.

3. The individual client will show confidence in his or her ability to apply the new acquired career information towards their educational objective. The client will further show his or her self-confidence in being more proactive in his or her career planning goals.

4. The client has successfully completed the career planning program or portfolio with the approval of the career counselor. The client student will return to see the career counselor after six months to report on his or her career and/or academic progress.
CHAPTER FIVE: PROJECT EVALUATION

Project Evaluation Summary

Chapters one and four of this career planning program project were provided to two experts in the field of Career Counseling to obtain their insights and thoughts on the quality and appropriateness of this project. The evaluators provided feedback on the utility, structure, and quality of the project by responding to the evaluator’s project questions (See appendix L). Below are the evaluators’ qualifications and feedback.

Evaluator One

This evaluator earned a Master of Social Work from University of Southern California and two post-master’s certificates from California State University, Northridge: one in College Counseling and Student Services and one in Career Education and Counseling. The evaluator has been a counselor/therapist for about 25 years. The evaluator has worked in community colleges and as a career counselor for about 15 years. The evaluator has taught graduate courses in College Counseling and Career Counseling in a CACREP accredited program for about 12 years.

Evaluator Two

This person has an earned doctorate in Counseling Psychology with a post-master’s certificate in Career Counseling and Development. The evaluator has worked for over a decade as a career counselor in college, governmental, non-profit organizations, and private practice settings. The evaluator has taught graduate counseling students in this discipline for over twenty years including a course in Career Adjustment of adults in transition.

Response to Feedback
First and foremost, the author wants to recognize and appreciate the evaluator’s contributions in providing valuable and meaningful feedback in their expertise as Career Counselors. The evaluators made several suggestions that can help strengthen the career program.

**Question One: To what degree does the career program offer self-understanding activities that allows the client to identify and cope with barriers?**

**Evaluator One**

The evaluator states that the career program allows the client to identify his or her barrier(s). Also, the evaluator is impressed by the notion that there are not many career programs that focus on self-efficacy and barriers, but this career program does. However, the evaluator believes that the client student will take more than a single discussion to develop coping mechanism to deal with his or her barrier(s). The author’s response to evaluator one is that the career program does need additional tasks to help the client student overcome his or her barriers.

**Evaluator Two**

According to the second evaluator, the career program directly addresses possible barriers in a student client’s life. The author’s response to evaluator two is that the career program does have barrier activities to assist the client student develop more self-awareness of his or her obstacles.

**Question Two: To what degree does the career program meet the psychological needs of the population?**

**Evaluator One**
The evaluator believes that the program adequately addresses pressing psychological needs of re-entry students. According to the evaluator, re-entry students can have other issues that overlap the self-limiting beliefs and self-efficacy concerns. It can be anticipated that there’s a greater prevalence of disabilities because of being an older adult, which can include learning disabilities, Attention Deficit Disorder, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and other psychological problems that can have an effect on the client student academic performance. Another concern can be client depression, which can result in a client’s feeling like a “failure” where he or she feels disappointment of “falling short” in achieving the “standard” of college success. It can also be client students that have substance abuse problems and can have a difficult time coping with his or her addiction. The author’s response is that the career program is not intended to provide psychological therapy; instead, the career program must be kept within the scope of its purpose and failure to do so can cause more harm to the student client. The author contends that once the career counselor recognizes issues that extend beyond the career development process, then it will be a good time to assist the client student to seek help and/or providing resource information.

**Evaluator Two**

The evaluator mentions that if the student client’s needs will be met, attention is the primary requirement, which this career program meets the psychological needs based on a high level of attention. The author’s response to evaluator two is that the well-being of the client student is important to further the career growth process. Otherwise, the student client may find it difficult to perform career-oriented tasks. The career program is attempting to encourage the client student to believe in his or her abilities.
Question Three: To what extent does the program contain activities that offer the client resources to help him or her connect to the world-of-work?

Evaluator One

The evaluator supports that the career program is very strong in providing activities to stimulate the client student to help him or her connect to the world-of-work. The evaluator views that the career program as an introduction to the client on occupational research and informational interviews to help him or her begin the process of understanding the world-of-work and begin the process of networking. In addition, developing a resume and cover letter will provide the client student a means to connect to potential employment opportunities that match the client student’s interests. The author’s response is that the career program provides resource guides on how to develop a resume, write a cover letter, how to conduct an informational interview, and where to do occupational research. These resource guides serve as a reference for the client student to review, in case he or she forgot a detail on how to complete the task. The author wants the career program to serve as a vehicle to motivate and increase self-efficacy through his or her voluntary participation.

Evaluator Two

The evaluator is recommending making the career program more extensive to provide the opportunity to include the completion of at least one informational interview. In addition, the evaluator finds that group support is very helpful for the types of activities related to job search that were included in this career program. The evaluator has suggested exploring implementing an ongoing group support for those student clients who have reached the end of the two-week program and desire the additional support.
The author’s response to evaluator two is that the career program offers the opportunity to expand the number of sessions and time needed to include additional career tasks. More importantly, it will depend on the student client willing to commit in performing new set of career tasks.

**Question Four: How effective are the career program goals’ aimed at increasing the client’s career development understanding?**

**Evaluator One**

The evaluator finds the career program goals’ to be quite effective. The evaluator thinks that clients who complete the program will be able to establish a foundation to understand the importance of the career planning process, in relation to the world-of-work and self-understanding.

In addition, the client student will gain insight in the process of decision-making. The evaluator states that the client student will also gain an understanding of the role of self-efficacy in developing a healthy career oriented process, and acquire the tools to enhance it. The author’s response is that each career task is goal-oriented, where the client student will be able to discover an end product. The author’s career program provides the client student ways to explore new realms of possibilities, which can translate into increasing his or her self-efficacy.

**Evaluator Two**

According to the evaluator, the planned interventions of the career program are those commonly available and tend to work well. The evaluator believes that the planned interventions will work with the proposed career program. The author’s response to evaluator two is that the career program is intended to meet certain common Career
Counseling practices. The career program is designed to assist the student client as he or she removes barrier(s) hindering him or her in the career development process.

**Question Five: How appropriate are the career assessments for this population?**

**Evaluator One**

The evaluator states that the assessments chosen are excellent for most populations, and for this population in particular. The evaluator elaborates why the assessment instruments being used are appropriate for this program in the following manner. First, the evaluator thinks that the Clifton Strengths Finder is particularly an effective choice for re-entry students. The evaluator states that it provides self-understanding as all career assessments do, the process of interpreting and digesting the results tend to be a powerful tool in raising self-efficacy. According to the evaluator, combining the “diagnostic” function with the “therapeutic” function in this manner is efficient, and particularly respectful of the students’ time. Second, the evaluator thinks that the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) assessment has a powerful effect on self-efficacy when interpreted well. The evaluator states that, “sometimes, a partial source of a person’s lower self-efficacy has been the time spent in ‘poor fit’ environments.” The evaluator believes when an individual spends a lot of time with a group that does not share his or her preferred way of doing things, he or she is constantly subjected to messages (verbal and/or non-verbal) such as “who he or she is” is “not OK.” The evaluator believes that the student client should be more organized, creative, logical, outgoing, flexible, or whatever it is that “they” are. According to the evaluator, some student clients can experience a liberation to realize that “the” problem has not been his or her own inadequacies, but rather a mismatch between his or her completely valid
approach and the preferred approach of some of the groups with which he or she has tried to work. The evaluator suggests that re-entry students are more likely to have spent time working in “poor fit” environments, and a fair number also have found the college environment to be a poor fit as well. Third, the evaluator finds the Career Values Card Sort a good activity choice for the targeted population. The evaluator believes re-entry students have often had more life experience, and thus have had more time to develop and recognize what it is important to him or her. The same can be said that the student client’s survival needs can be more prominent, and thus he or she may prioritize values that fall closer to the bottom of Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs. Finally, the evaluator finds the Strong Interest Inventory (SII) assessment instrument very beneficial with any population, including re-entry students. The author’s response to evaluator one is that the assessment instruments are implemented in the program to help the client obtain knowledge about themselves such as his or her interests, values, strengths, and develop a higher level of self-efficacy. In addition, it can aid the client student in understanding how he or she fits to various job environments.

Evaluator Two

According to the evaluator, the effectiveness of the chosen assessments may rest upon the reading comprehension level of the targeted student client group for this career program. The author’s response to evaluator two is that the career program offers opportunity for self-exploration, but to do that the client student must have strong comprehension skills. Perhaps, the career program can target student clients that have strong English assessment scores in college, but it will contribute in lowering self-efficacy.
Question Six: What are the strengths of the career program for this population?

Evaluator One

The evaluator states that the career program not only has a strong foundation in basic career development strategies, but it also focuses on deeper counseling issues as far as using a cognitive-behavioral framework that lends itself to efficient delivery of services. According to the evaluator, “the cognitive-behavioral career development approach is relatively simple for new counselors and other student service professionals to understand and apply, which makes training easier, and makes it more likely that the program will be maintained after the one who designed it has moved on to other projects.” The author’s feedback is that helping the client student establish a blueprint for success is the first step in building momentum to do certain career planning tasks. The author believes that the client student needs the career counselor to be a source to get encouragement and be kept on track. The author feels that the client students need a strong support system and the more to gain trust in the career counselor, the more likely he or she can complete the career program on time.

Evaluator Two

According to the evaluator, the author of this career program has identified the needs of the student clients well and has addressed them in what appears to the evaluator as quite meaningful. The evaluator expressed liking the development of a portfolio as a reference for later use. The author’s response to evaluator two is that benefits can arise from the career program can, which provide opportunity for self-growth. This is the aim of the program. The more the student client gains exposure to learning about themselves, the greater belief he or she will have in making good career decisions.
Question Seven: What suggestions or recommendations would you give to improve the career program?

Evaluator One

The evaluator proposed several suggestions to improve the career program. For example, the evaluator suggested in infusing each session with discussion about remediating barriers and enhancing self-efficacy. Also, the evaluator suggested shifting the intervention activity session that discusses barriers to an earlier point in the career program or even in between some of the assessment sessions. Finally, the evaluator feels that completing this career program in two-weeks seems unrealistic. According to the evaluator, the career program requires 10 – 15 hours of contact with the counselor, which excludes the additional time needed to do occupational research, resume development, informational interviewing, etc. At the same time, the student client will be required to do homework for his or her classes, emergencies might arise, and perhaps, the student client has a job. The evaluator thinks that even if it were realistic to complete the career program in two-weeks, the self-awareness and changes the career counselor is hoping to observe will take time for the client to process. The intervention also includes assisting the student client in a joint effort to deal with barriers and this takes time to implement. According to the evaluator, it will be ideal to add more sessions and time that will allow the career counselor to provide support for the process of growth.

Evaluator one asserts that Session 6 is too ambitious, for the fact that it takes time to create a resume, conduct career research and informational interviews. The participants require more time to process the information gleaned from this session.
Therefore, this session could be separated into two or three sessions. These changes are encouraged before implementing the program.

**Evaluator Two**

The evaluator suggested the addition of more practice activities, in particular at least one informational interview that is debriefed either with the career counselor or in a group setting with other student clients and the career counselor. The evaluator thinks that the group support and additional sessions would strengthen the career program. Finally, the evaluator is concerned about the student client being able to process all of the career program information within a two-week period. The evaluator suggested to increase the time period over two-weeks to help lessen the student clients’ mental stress.

The evaluators’ feedback to questions one, five, and six surrounded the amount of time necessary to complete the project. The author plans to revisit this session and revise it into short sessions to receive more effective outcomes. Also, the author acknowledges the importance in extending the time period of the career program to allow the student client feel more comfortable and be more focused-oriented. For instance, evaluator two stated to inquire if these student clients in the career program have the time, emotional energy and mental maturity to be able to follow through with all the tasks planned in the slotted timeframe. Already, these student clients are dealing with self-limiting beliefs; it is important to consider that assisting the student client transition slowly from one task to another would better enable the student client to find valuable and positive meaning in the process.

**Conclusion**
Overall, the evaluators are satisfied with this proposed career program’s utility in raising the student clients’ self-efficacy, which will then translate in making better career and educational decision-making choices. However, counselors implementing this program are urged to include discussion of barriers in more of the sessions. The student client will most likely exit the program with a higher level of self-awareness and preparedness in relation to the world-of-work.
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Appendix A

Client’s Intake Form

I. IDENTIFYING INFORMATION

Name: ________________________________________________________________
    (Last)       (First)       (Middle)

Address:    _____________________________________________________________
    (No.)       (Street)       (City)       (State)       (Zip)

Home Phone: ___________________    Cell Phone: ___________________

Referred by: ___________________

Date of Birth: _________________    Gender (please indicate): _____________

Ethnicity (check one or more if applicable): □ American Indian or Alaska Native □
    Asian □ Black or African American □ Hispanic or Latino □ Native Hawaiian or other
    Pacific Islander □ White □ other: ____________

Marital Status (please check one): Single □ Married □ Separated □ Divorced □
    Widowed □

If married or partnered, for how long? _______________

Partner’s Name: _________________    Partner’s Occupation: _______________

Children:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>_____________</td>
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</table>

Parent’s/Guardian’s Occupation: ___________    Level of Education: ___________

II. EDUCATION
College or Vocational Training:

________________________________________________________________________

Degree/Year: _____________________ Major: _____________

Degree/Year: _____________________ Major: _____________

Additional Education (Courses, Seminars, Certification, Programs, etc.)

________________________________________________________________________

III.  EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Work Experience: (List the most recent jobs first and work backward)

Note: If you have a resume, please attach in lieu of filling out this section)

Position

Employer

Time employed

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Special hobbies, leisure interests, volunteer work, civic involvement, etc:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

IV.  CAREER DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION

What are your present career aspirations? Assume no barriers to achieving them.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Who or what has had the greatest influence on your career choice(s)?
What was your childhood occupational interest or fantasy?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

What leisure activities or hobbies do you enjoy now and/or have you enjoyed in the past?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Do you have any limitations? (List conditions and their effect on your career development)

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

V. CAREER COUNSELING CONCERN

☐ Need assistance in career decision-making
☐ Uncertain about career options
☐ Leaving the area. Desire to explore relocation and job search strategies
☐ Need to plan for the future
☐ Need to alter career goals
☐ Desire to improve self
☐ Update Resume
☐ Improve interviewing skills
☐ Do self-assessments
Appendix B

Knowing Self Exercise Handout

The MBTI is designed to identify an individual’s preferences on eight personality type-based characteristics. There are 16 possible types based on preference combinations.

Instructions: The client will raise his or her awareness by clarifying why the personality type best represents him or her on the following worksheet:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explain why the personality type best represents you</th>
<th>Indicate Personality Type Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extravert:</strong> focus on the outer world, outspoken, and don’t shy away from meeting strangers</td>
<td><strong>Introvert:</strong> tends to be timid, speaks low, and it takes a while to know him or her</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sensing:</strong> detailed-oriented, is hands-on, and goes with conventional wisdom</td>
<td><strong>Intuition:</strong> strong ability to conceptualize, wants to find the unknown, &amp; enjoys innovating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thinking:</strong> seeks truth, not what</td>
<td><strong>Feeling:</strong> high tolerance level,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
you know but want you can prove, and strong reasoning skills

| Judging: needs order, self-starter, and maintains to-do-list updated | Perceiving: works well under pressure, can adjust to any environment setting, and is open-minded | violence is not an option, and approachable/kind |
Appendix C

SII Party Exercise Handout

How the party exercise is played: The SII party exercise is a game where both people and work environments are classified into six different groups. Different individuals’ personalities may find different environments more to their liking. Usually, individuals have two or three letters known as your Holland’s Code or theme code.

Instructions: After hearing descriptions of each of the personality interest types (i.e., Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventions), from your counselor, imagine attending a party in which the six groups of people are interacting. Chose the environment that fits your occupational interests.

SII Party Hexagon Model:

![SII Party Hexagon Model]

Briefly describe what would it be like conversing with party groups not similar to your theme codes results?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
What skills and/or abilities would you share with the party group that is common to your characteristics?
Appendix D

Clifton Strengths Finder Reflective Exercise Handout

Clifton Strengths Finder gives clients the opportunity to develop strengths by building on your greatest talents — the way in which you most naturally think, feel, and behave as unique individuals. To learn more about the 34 themes, go to:

http://www.strengthsquest.com/content/143792/Strengths-Educators.aspx

Instructions: Using the results from the strengths-based assessment, review each of the five theme descriptors and write down a key phrase or statement that best resonates with you.

Strength theme #1:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Strength theme #2:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Strength theme #3:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Strength theme #4:
________________________________________________________________________
Then, identify at least two barriers that prevent you from pursuing your career aspiration using your strengths themes to assist you to overcome such obstacle:

Barrier #1:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Applying strengths:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Barrier #2:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Applying strengths:
Appendix E

Summary Sheet of Prioritized Values

Introduction: The Values Card Sort provides a quick and easy way to clarify what you want in a career. Accomplishing this activity is like playing solitaire. You have a deck of cards and will deal them out into several categories. Where you put the cards will depend upon your feelings. Identify what is important to you, without regard for what you think other people would say or want you to say (Knowdell, 1998, p. 3)

Instructions: Copy the headings of your values cards onto this form as you have listed and prioritized them. This will provide you a stable record and ready reference sheet of your choices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Always Valued</th>
<th>Often Valued</th>
<th>Sometimes Valued</th>
<th>Seldom Valued</th>
<th>Never Valued</th>
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Adapted from: Career Values Card Sort – (Knowdell, 1998, Career Research & Testing, Inc., P.O. Box 611930, San Jose, CA 95161)
Appendix F

Resume Writing Guide Handout

What is a Resume?

- It is the first meeting between you and the employer.
- It tells a great deal about you.
- It gets you interviewed for a possible position.
- It is your “calling” card, so it is important to remember that “first” impressions are lasting ones.

Resume Guidelines:

- Convince an employer of your worth for an interview.
- Keep as brief as possible without sacrificing essential qualifications information.
- Format must be pleasing to the eye.
- Focus on strengths and accomplishments.
- Don’t exaggerate.

Preparing Your Own Resume:

- Use action verbs.
- Organize your resume to highlight your unique skills and strengths.
  Use whatever combinations of organizational styles you think best highlight your individual qualifications.
- The most common resume styles are: reverse chronological, Functional, and Combination.

Resume “No-no’s”:

- Avoid abbreviations and/or acronyms
• Never use pronouns such as: “I”, “me” and/or “my”

• No fancy fonts, binders or layouts

• Avoid lists of boring sentences

• Photographs

• Personal, family or health information
Appendix G

How to Write a Cover Letter Guide Handout

What is a Cover Letter?

- A supplement to the resume that includes more detailed information about yourself.
- It highlights key points in your resume.
- It expresses your interest in a position.
- It shows your qualifications to a prospective employer.

Pre-Cover Letter:

- If you have an employer in mind, do some research regarding their mission statement, values, and/or goals.
- Review websites, brochures, pamphlets and any other pertinent materials you can find about the potential employer.
- If you can, try to speak with current employees; this will provide you with a unique inside perspective.
- Once you’ve done your research and you have a good idea of what qualifications the employer is looking for, it’s time to separate yourself from the rest of the pack.
- Before you begin writing your letter, take some time to brainstorm. Make a list of reasons why you’re the ideal candidate.

A Few Things to Keep in Mind:

- Limit the use of “I.” Instead, place the focus on the employer and use the word “you.”
• Avoid writing more than one page; since you are probably competing with other applicants, employers just don't have the time to read more than one page.

• The point of the cover letter is to address more specifically about your resume’s selling points not to repeat the same things that appear in your resume.

Beginning The Letter:

• You should address the letter to a specific person at the company that you’re applying to. You can usually find a name in the employer’s publications or you can inquire by telephone. Ex.:

  Doc Solar
  Supervisor
  33118 Southeast Ave.
  Los Angeles, CA 90280

Salutation:

• If you are addressing the letter to a specific person, start out with the formal salutation:

  Dear Mr. Solar: If you don’t know the name use:

  Dear Hiring Manager.

  Refrain from using the old standbys: To whom it may concern or Dear Sir or Madam.

Opening Paragraph:

• The opening paragraph should accomplish a couple of goals:

  1. It should grab the reader’s attention.

  2. Discuss the position you are applying for.

  3. List your references or how you heard about the job.

  4. Highlight the main points you will focus on in the letter.
Body Paragraphs:

- The body paragraph should accomplish a couple of goals:
  1. Refer employer to certain points in your resume.
  2. Emphasize your strongest qualifications or top selling points.
  3. Show how these qualifications will benefit the employer that you’re applying for.
  4. You may provide examples of your achievements that have benefited from previous employment.
  5. Be specific in your descriptions.

Closing Paragraph:

- Your closing paragraph should accomplish a couple of goals:
  1. Ask for an interview.
  2. Set up a possible time and date.
  3. Try using an active ending; in other words, rather than asking them to contact you, tell them you will contact them in a few days.
  4. Be genuine and thank them for their time.

Double and Triple Check Before Sending:

- Check for spelling errors and typos—professionalism is a must
- Don’t go over a page
- Always customize your cover letter. Don’t forget to change your contact information.
- Maintain a friendly and professional tone throughout the letter.
Appendix H

Informational Interview Guide Handout

Informational Interview: Providing Direction for You

What is the purpose of an informational interview? It is a brief meeting between you and a person to investigate a career and learn about the work within a specific career. You should spend about 20-to-30 minutes during the interviews. Your goal is not necessarily to get a job, but to find out about jobs you would find satisfying and a fit for your interest, skills, and personality. Informational interviews can help you learn more about the realities of working in a particular occupation, discover careers you never knew existed, and uncover your professional strengths and weakness. Also, it can provide you with an inside look at an organization that you may want to work for in the future.

What is the process of an informational interview? If you have an idea about the kinds of work you want to do, consider visiting a career or guidance counselor to assist you to clarify your interest and skills. Also, browse occupational descriptions online to help you identify careers. After finding a few possible occupations, it is time for you to choose people to interview. Look for people actually working in the occupations that you are considering.
What is the expected outcome of an informational interview? Informational interviewing will provide you with new insights about the career options and work settings. It is also important that you take a moment to record your thoughts and feelings about the occupation and workplace of the person that you interviewed. This will help you refer back to the interview when making a career decision. Do not ask for a job or internship, instead gather information.

How to locate a contact? The easiest way to start is to ask people that you already know; family members, friends, teachers, or past coworkers that may work in the occupation you want to explore, or they may know someone who does. Another source of contact is the Career Center and/or the Alumni office. You may be part of a professional association and usually they produce trade magazines and/or newsletters describing the activities of specific members. Also, you can find people to interview by contacting businesses and organizations that hire the types of workers you hope to consult.

What would you say (script) during the first contact? You should tell the interviewee that you want to speak with them briefly about their careers and that you want information, not a job. In addition, you want their professional advice and input. The most common and appropriate script to request for an informational interview is the following: “Good morning/afternoon. My name is ________ and I’m a student at ___________________. I was referred to you by _________. I am interested in learning more about your current job experience and expertise in the field. Would you be willing to take from your valuable time to meet with me for an informational interview that will last for about 20-30 minutes? Also, I am open to other preferences that work best for
you. Thank you for taking my call, scheduling to meet with me, and I am looking forward to meeting you.”

How to select an appropriate contact? You should look for people actually working in the occupation that you are considering. These people know more about what the work is like than human resources or hiring managers do. It is also important to choose people with the same level of responsibility you would have if you entered the occupation.

What questions to ask? Ask questions that are open-ended to engage the interviewee in a conversational exchange. A good guideline is to choose about 10-15 questions that most interest you. Prioritize and be selective when choosing your questions to acquire optimal information about the interviewee. Some of those questions can be the following:

- What kinds of tasks do you do on a typical day or in a typical week?
- How did you prepare for this career?
- What characteristics does a person in this job need to have?
- How does this career affect your lifestyle?
- Do you usually work independently or as part of a team?
- What are some of the more difficult or frustrating parts of this career?
- How does your work fit into the mission of the organization?
- What types of advancement opportunities are available for an entry-level worker in this career?
- Is this career changing? How?
Do you have any advice on how people interested in this career should prepare?

What would be the evaluation process and the points/issues to evaluate following an informational interview? You should try to answer questions like the following: What did you learn in the interview? What did you like? What didn’t you like? Did you uncover any new concerns about or advantages to the occupation? What advice did you receive? Did you discover another occupation that you want to pursue? After answering several of these questions, you can test it further with additional applied self-exploration, such as job shadowing or other hands-on opportunities.

What is the follow-up? After an informational interview, you should show your gratitude to your interviewee by writing and/or emailing a thank you note no later than one week after the informational interview. The thank you note can be brief, a paragraph or two expressing appreciation for the time spent and advice given, and perhaps recalling a particular helpful piece of information during the informational interview.
Appendix I

Career Research Websites Handout

**Career information links**

- Career One Stop: Provides information on exploring careers, do job search, get helpful tips for resume writing and/or interviews, and learn more on education or training planning — http://www.careeronestop.org/

- Occupational Outlook Handbook: Provides information on occupational profiles and describe what they do, work environment, and how to become one in the US — http://www.bls.gov/ooh/

- Occupational Information Network (O*NET): Provides detailed descriptions of the world of work and information about occupational job interests, skills, and work values — http://www.onetonline.org

- EUREKA — Provides information to identify your skills, research careers, search for schools, and take self-assessments — http://eureka.org/index.php

**Pay for college links:**

- FAFSA web: Website to apply for financial aid assistance to help pay for educational costs — http://www.fafsa.ed.gov

**Transfer links:**

- California State University Campuses:

  23 Universities within the system

  Application filing periods

  Fall: Oct. 1 - Nov. 31

  Winter quarter: June 1 -June 30 (not all campuses admit in winter)
Spring: Aug. 1 - 31 (not all campuses admit in spring)

Estimated CA Tuition Fees Annually: $5,970

not including food, books, supplies, transportation, room & board

http://www.csumentor.edu/

- University of California Campuses:

  10 Universities within the system

  Application filing periods

  Fall: Nov. 1 - 31

  Winter quarter/spring semester: Jul. 1 - 31 (not all campuses admit during these terms)

  Estimated CA Tuition Fees Annually: $12,192

  not including food, books, supplies, transportation, room & board

  http://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/transfer/index.html

- Use www.Assist.org to:

  o Explore articulation for California’s public colleges and universities:

  o Acquire articulation agreements for your major.

  o Explore majors.

  o Find which CSU or UC university offers your major.

  o Compare major requirements for your universities of interest

Research university link:

- College Navigator:

  o Access information on more than 9,000 colleges, universities, and postsecondary vocational and technical schools in the U.S.
o Search database by location, type of institution, program, and majors offered
   Select several school profiles for side-by-side comparisons
o http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator
Appendix J

**Intervention Exercise**

*Instructions*: Please circle any barrier(s) that has impacted your decision on choosing a major study of interest to pursue your career dream. In addition, briefly write a statement of strategies used, if any, in an attempt to cope with the barrier. If not listed, please write it down on the “Other information” section to express what the barrier is and what you have done to deal with the barrier.

**Institutional barriers**:

- College too far from home
- No child care offered
- Access to advisors limited
- Faculty’s availability conflicts with personal obligations
- Class times conflicts with personal obligations
- Inadequate and/or difficult to find campus resources

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

**Situational barriers**:

- Financial limitations
- No stable housing
- Need legal assistance
- Lack of transportation
• Can’t afford child care services

Psychological barriers:

• Difficulty creating a plan
• Past poor academic performance affects my confidence
• Not enough family support
• Fear of not being able to adapt to the classroom setting
• Too many commitments affects my focus
• Too old to pursue a career change

Other information:
Appendix K

Career Planning Portfolio Checklist

Cohort Year: _________

Student’s name: ____________________

Student ID: ___________________

Career Preparation Planning

Career choice(s) under transfer major choice:

1st__________________ 2nd__________________ 3rd__________________

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator Assessment: Yes or No   Date completed: ________

Personality type based profile: ____________

Strong Interest Inventory Assessment: Yes or No   Date completed: ________

General Occupational Themes (GOT): 1st_______ 2nd_______ 3rd_______

Clifton Strengths Finder™ Assessment: Yes or No   Date completed: ________

Top five talent themes: 1st__________________ 2nd__________________

3rd__________________ 4th__________________ 5th__________________

Career Values Card Sort: Yes or No   Date completed: ________

Highly Valued Choices: 1st__________________ 2nd__________________

3rd__________________ 4th__________________ 5th__________________

6th__________________ 7th__________________ 8th__________________

Additional personality trait assessment(s) taken:

1.  Assessment name/date taken/results:

_____________________________________________________________

Resume: Yes or No   Date completed: ________ or Workshop date: ________
Cover letter: Yes or No  Date completed: _______ or Workshop date: _______

Skills: __________ Abilities: __________ Values: __________ Interests: __________

Received Informational Interview Guide: Yes or No  If yes, when: _______

Internship opportunities:

1. Where: __________________________________________

   Time period/Hours earned: __________________________

   Skills gained: ____________________________________

2. Where: __________________________________________

   Time period/Hours earned: __________________________

   Skills gained: ____________________________________

Academic Preparation Planning

Associate’s degree plan to earn: _________________

Transfer major choice: ________________ & Projected transfer term: ________

Transfer school option(s): 1st___________ 2nd___________

3rd___________ 4th___________

Financial Aid Status

Federal Pell Grant eligibility remaining: _________________

Note: Limited by federal law to be the equivalent of six years or 600%. To check eligibility percentage, log on to: http://www.nslds.ed.gov/nslds_SA/

**Five P’s motto for success is to be: Patient, Persistent, Positive, Proactive, & Productive
Appendix L

**Project Evaluation Questions**

**Question One**: To what degree does the career program offer self-understanding activities that allows the client to identify and cope with barriers?

**Question Two**: To what degree does the career program meet the psychological needs of the population?

**Question Three**: To what extent does the program contain activities that offer the client resources to help him or her connect to the world-of-work?

**Question Four**: How effective is the career program goals’ aimed at increasing the client’s career development understanding?

**Question Five**: How appropriate are the career assessments for this population?

**Question Six**: What are the strengths of the career program for this population?

**Question Seven**: What suggestions or recommendations would you give to improve the career program?