Thinking Outside the Books...

Another Look at Career Texts and Courses

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Overview

• Background of Career Courses
• Effects of Career Courses
• Advocacy
• Choosing a Career Text
• Career Course Options
• Case Study
Background of Career Courses
Background of Career Courses

• Gain in popularity
• Reduction of published research studies
  – 1976-1989 - 31
  – 1990-1999 - 11
  – 2000-2005 - 6
    (Folsom et al., 2005)

• Examination of 47 studies
  – Classes were more effective than most interventions
    (Whiston et al., 1998)
class size  The New Global Economy
Retirement  “The dual agenda”
GPA cutoffs  Employment security  Academic
Advising  OHSA  Immigration
WARN
SOCIAL SECURITY
Overtime  Housing Markets
COBRA  Telecommuting
Health Care  Retention rates
Budget cuts  Affirmative Action
(Sweet & Meiksins, 2007)
Effects of Career Courses

Education = future
Effective career courses provide

- Opportunity to clarify goals in writing
- Individualized interpretations & feedback
- Information about risks & rewards of career fields & occupations
- Study of models/mentors who exhibit effective career behavior
- Assistance in developing support networks

(Brown & Krane, 2000)
“In reviewing the research literature on the effects of career courses, an understanding of the distinction between outputs and outcomes is helpful in evaluating the studies”

(Folsom, Reardon, & Lee, 2005, p. 8)
Effects of Career Courses

• Outputs:
  Skills, knowledge, and attitudes acquired by participants as the result of an intervention

• Outcomes:
  Resultant effects occurring at some later point in time

(Peterson & Burck, 1982)
Outputs Leading to Outcomes

Effectiveness of Services

- Diagnosis
  - Need for Career Service

- Prescription
  - Career Development Course

- Process
  - Unit I: Career Concepts and Applications
    - Unit II: Social Conditions Affecting Career Development
    - Unit III: Implementing a Strategic Career Plan

- Outputs
  - Self-Knowledge
  - Occupational Knowledge
  - Career Decidedness
  - Effective Career Plan Implementation

- Outcomes
  - Retention to Graduation
  - Timely Graduation
  - Higher Cumulative GPA
  - Reduced Course Withdrawals

(Reardon et al., 2001; Peterson & Burck, 1982)
Effects of Career Courses

Output Findings

40 studies (1970’s to 2005)

90% (36) reported positive gain
  – More positive career planning thoughts
  – Increased career decidedness
  – Higher vocational identity
  – Internal locus-of-control
  – Career maturity

10% (4) reported no changes

(Folsom et al., 2005)

Outcome Findings

16 studies (1970’s to 2005)

88% (14) reported positive gains
  – Job satisfaction
  – Job performance ratings
  – Course satisfaction
  – Level of personal adjustment
  – Deciding on a major
  – Timely graduation from college
  – Cumulative GPA

12% (2) reported no changes

(Folsom et al., 2005)
Effects of Career Courses: Accountability

• **Accountability vs. Evaluation**  
  (Peterson & Burck, 1982)

• **Factors to measure**
  – Client satisfaction
  – Improved career decision making skills *(output)*
  – External indicators
    • # of jobs generated
    • # of successful transitions
  – Longitudinal studies
  – Process variables
    • # of clients served including demographic variables
    • # of assessments provided

(Synthesis Report, 2003; OECD, 2004; Magnusson et al., 2005)
Advocacy
Expanding your Advocacy

• Identify issues
• Conduct research
• Identify and contact your senators and representatives
• Become part of the Legislative Listserv
  – Ncdaleaders-request@acrna.net
• Act locally

(Jennings and Mazur, 2008)
Taking Action

• Stay informed & communicate with peers in field
• Teach legislators
  – Attend public forums/speak publicly
  – Write
• Empower clients to be their own advocates
• Participate in professional associations

(Brown, 2006; Jennings and Mazur, 2008)
Choosing a Career Text
Analysis of Career Texts

• Price
• Purpose
• Topics covered
• Theory/conceptual base
• Instructional support
Custom Publishing

• Options
  – Rebinds
  – Take chapters from various texts
  – Write a specialized book
  – Course pack of articles
  – eBook/downloadable texts

• Benefits
  – Specific to your objectives
  – Less expensive
  – Royalties
Custom Publishing

• Price
  – Number printed
  – Permissions cleared
  – Color
  – Cover
  – Page count

• Time
  – 2- 3 ½ months
Career Course Options
Career Course Options

- Credit vs. No credit
- 1st year vs. Upper division
- Elective vs. Required course
- Registration open vs. Deadline
- Career counseling staff vs. Faculty
- Distance vs. Face-to-face
- Text vs. No text

(Folsom et al, 2005)
Career Course Options

• Structured vs. Open-ended format

• Career planning vs. Job search focus

• Stand-alone vs. Fully integrated format

• Population specific vs. Nonspecific
Case Study
Students’ Perspectives

Why are you taking this class?
Case Study

- Demographics of students
- Instructional design
- Activities and assignments
Demographics

Gender
- Female 51%
- Male 49%

Ethnicity
- African American 21.4%
- American Indian 0.7%
- Asian American 0%
- Hispanic American 5.5%
- Caucasian 71%
- “Other” 1.4%

Age
- 18-36
- Mean: 21.81, SD: 2.767

Class
- Freshmen 4.8%
- Sophomores 16.6%
- Juniors 15.9%
- Seniors 62.1%
- Nontraditional 0.7%

Disability
- 3 students, .02%

Athletes
- 12 students, .08%

(January 2007)
What do you think about the way the class is designed?
Instructional Design

- 12 sections/yr (28-30 students/class)
- Variable credit
- Elective course
- Instructor-student ratio = 1:7-10
- Team-taught instruction model
  - Small groups, Individual conferences
- Career Center as course lab
- Comprehensive in scope
- Theory
Sequence of Assignments

**Unit I**
- Self Directed Search
- Autobiography
- Skills Assessment
- Career Thoughts Inventory
- Review SDS Interpretive Report & Skills Assignment
- CFA Worksheet
- Draft Individual Action Plan
- Instructor Conference
- Final Individual Action Plan

**Unit II**
- CFA Paper
- Information Interviews
- SIGI 3 or eDiscover
- Choices Planner

**Unit III**
- Information Interview Reports
- Draft Resume
- Draft Cover Letter
- Strategic Academic Career Plan
- Final Resume
- Final Cover Letter
Activities

• Values Auction
• Scavenger Hunt
• Holland Party Game
• Portfolio Assignment
• Internet Job Search
• Employer Panels
• Analyze CASVE
• Organizational Culture Simulation
• Reframe Negative Thoughts
What did you get out of this class?
Discussion and Questions
For More Information

• **Syllabus:**
  http://www.career.fsu.edu/student/current/choose_a_major/sds_3340/syllabus.html

• **Copy of presentation materials:**
  http://www.career.fsu.edu/techcenter

• **Call (850) 644-6431 or e-mail:**
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