UCI | Division of
       | Career Pathways

Graduate Student Independent Exercises

Self Knowledge

How will you be able to identify potential career options if you don't know who you are or what you want?

A critical part of career-decision making is assessing who you are: understanding your interests, values, skills, motivations, and preferences. With self-knowledge comes the ability to recognize career-related information that either fits you or does not. This information helps clarify your potential career paths and guides you through different life transitions.

The following self-assessment exercises are designed to aid with your self-reflection. You are strongly encouraged to complete one or more of the exercises and make an appointment with a career counselor to discuss. Contact the UCI Division of Career Pathways at (949) 824-6881 to schedule an appointment. If you would like to explore further with standardized assessments, ask about the Strong Interest Inventory and the Myers Briggs Type Indicator.

Functional/Transferable Skills Checklist

Over the years, you have developed many skills from your total life experiences including coursework, extracurricular activities, leisure pursuits, etc. If you have researched topics and written reports or edited and presented papers for classes, you have used skills that are not limited to just one discipline but are transferable to many different occupations or disciplines. A prospective employer expects you to be able to apply the skills you have learned in college and in everyday life to the work environment. Use the following checklist to identify some of <u>your</u> transferable skills. The following skills are arranged in "skill clusters." Within each skill cluster, there are a number of related skills. Place a check in the box next to the skill that you **<u>enjoy</u>** using and in which you feel competent. Remember competency does not imply perfection.

Verbal Communication

- ☐ Perform and entertain before groups
- ☐ Speak well in public appearances
- ☐ Confront and express opinions without offending
- ☐ Interview people to obtain information
- ☐ Handle complaints in person/over phone
- ☐ Present ideas effectively in speeches or lecture
- ☐ Persuade/influence others to a certain point of view
- ☐ Sell ideas, products or services
- ☐ Debate ideas with others
- ☐ Participate in group discussions and teams

Nonverbal Communication

- ☐ Listen carefully and attentively
- ☐ Convey a positive self-image
- ☐ Use body language that makes others comfortable
- ☐ Develop rapport easily with groups of people
- ☐ Establish environment to support learning
- ☐ Express feelings through body language
- ☐ Promote concepts through a variety of media
- ☐ Respond to non-verbal cues
- ☐ Model behavior or concepts for others

Written Communication

- ☐ Write technical language, reports, manuals
- ☐ Write poetry, fiction plays
- ☐ Write grant proposals
- ☐ Prepare and write logically written reports

- ☐ Write copy for sales and advertising
- ☐ Edit and proofread written material
- ☐ Prepare revisions of written material
- ☐ Utilize all forms of technology for writing
- ☐ Write case studies and treatment plans
- ☐ Demonstrate expertise in grammar and style

Train/Consult

- ☐ Teach, advise, coach, empower
- ☐ Conduct needs assessments
- ☐ Use a variety of media for presentation
- ☐ Develop educational curriculum and materials
- ☐ Create and administer evaluation plan
- ☐ Facilitate a group
- ☐ Explain difficult ideas, complex topics
- ☐ Assess learning styles and respond accordingly
- ☐ Consult and recommend solutions
- ☐ Write well organized and documented reports

Analyze

- ☐ Study data or behavior for meaning and solutions
- ☐ Analyze quantitative, physical and/or scientific data
- ☐ Write analysis of study and research
- ☐ Compare and evaluate information
- ☐ Systematize information and results
- ☐ Apply curiosity
- ☐ Investigate clues
- ☐ Formulate insightful and relevant questions
- ☐ Use technology for statistical analysis

Research

- Identify appropriate information sources
- Search written, oral and technological information
- Interview primary sources
- Hypothesize and test for results
- Compile numerical and statistical data
- Classify and sort information into categories
- Gather information from a number of sources
- Patiently search for hard-to-find information
- Utilize electronic search methods

Plan and Organize

- Identify and organize tasks or information
- Coordinate people, activities and details
- Develop a plan and set objectives
- Set up and keep time schedules
- Anticipate problems and respond with solutions
- Develop realistic goals and action to attain them
- Arrange correct sequence of information and actions
- Create guidelines for implementing an action
- Create efficient systems
- Follow through, insure completion of a task

Counsel and Serve

- Counsel, advise, consult, guide others
- Care for and serve people; rehabilitate, heal
- Demonstrate empathy, sensitivity and patience
- Help people make their own decisions
- Help others improve health and welfare
- Listen empathically and with objectivity
- Coach, guide, encourage individuals to achieve goals
- Mediate peace between conflicting parties
- Knowledge of self-help theories and programs
- Facilitate self-awareness in others

Interpersonal Relations

- Convey a sense of humor
- Initiate and maintain relationships
- Anticipate people's needs and reactions
- Express feelings appropriately
- Process human interactions, understand others
- Encourage, empower, advocate for people
- Create positive, hospitable environment
- Adjust plans for the unexpected
- Facilitate conflict management
- Communicate well with diverse groups/strive for cultural competency
- Listen carefully to communication

Leadership

- Envision the future and lead change
- Establish policy
- Set goals and determine courses of action
- Motivate/inspire others to achieve common goals
- Create innovative solutions to complex problems
- Communicate well with all levels of the organization
- Develop and mentor talent
- Negotiate terms and conditions
- Take risks, make hard decisions, be decisive
- Encourage the use of technology at all levels

Management

- Manage personnel, projects and time
- Foster a sense of ownership in employees
- Delegate responsibility and review performance
- Increase productivity and efficiency to achieve goals
- Develop and facilitate Work Teams
- Provide training for development of staff
- Adjust plans/procedures for the unexpected
- Facilitate conflict management
- Communicate well with diverse groups/strive for cultural competency
- Utilize technology to facilitate management

Financial

- ☐ Calculate, perform mathematical computations
- ☐ Work with precision with numerical data
- ☐ Keep accurate and complete financial records
- ☐ Perform accounting functions and procedures
- ☐ Compile data and apply statistical analysis
- ☐ Create computer generated charts for presentation
- ☐ Use computer software for records and analysis
- ☐ Forecast, estimate expenses and income
- ☐ Appraise and analyze costs
- ☐ Create and justify organization's budget to others

Administrative

- ☐ Communicate well with key people in organization
- ☐ Identify and purchase necessary resource materials
- ☐ Utilize computer software and equipment
- ☐ Organize, improve, adapt office systems
- ☐ Track progress of projects and troubleshoot
- ☐ Achieve goals within budget and time schedule
- ☐ Assign tasks and sets standards for support staff
- ☐ Hire and supervise temporary personnel as needed
- ☐ Demonstrate flexibility during crisis
- ☐ Oversee communication, email and telephones
- ☐ Attend to detail

Create and Innovate

- ☐ Visualize concepts and results
- ☐ Intuit strategies and solutions
- ☐ Execute color, shape and form
- ☐ Brainstorm and make use of group synergy
- ☐ Communicate with metaphors
- ☐ Invent products through experimentation
- ☐ Express ideas through art form
- ☐ Create images through, sketches, sculpture, etc.
- ☐ Utilize computer software for artistic creations
- ☐ Remember faces, accurate spatial memory

Construct and Operate

- ☐ Assemble and install technical equipment
- ☐ Build a structure, follow proper sequence
- ☐ Understand blueprints and architectural specs
- ☐ Repair machines
- ☐ Analyze and correct plumbing or electrical problems
- ☐ Use tools and machines
- ☐ Master athletic skills
- ☐ Landscape and farm: Drive and operate vehicles
- ☐ Use scientific or medical equipment

Other

_____

_____

_____

_____

When you have completed the whole exercise, choose your four favorite "clusters" (those clusters in which you have the most checks), then arrange them in order of greatest enjoyment/satisfaction.

1. Cluster:

   _____

   _____
   _____

2. Cluster:

   _____

   _____
   _____

3. Cluster:

   _____

   _____
   _____

4. Cluster:

   _____

   _____

Summarizing Your Skills

Review your Functional/Transferable Skills Checklist with your four favorite skill clusters and write a summarizing paragraph.

Example of a skills summary paragraph:

"I seek a job in which **communicating** both verbally and in writing is central. Specifically, I'm good at **compiling** information from a variety of sources into a final report form. I am better at **writing** factual rather than persuasive material. I enjoy **explaining** information to individuals or small groups. My organizing skills evident in **preparing** reports are also demonstrated in my ability to **coordinate** people and resources to **complete** a project. In addition to these primary skill areas, I am good at **budgeting** my time, **setting** priorities and **attending** to details."

Try writing your skills summary in the space below:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Points to Consider:

1. Of the skills you have checked, what kinds of work activities, work environments or occupations can you name that would utilize those skills?

2. Which skills would you like to develop? How might you begin to acquire them?

Values Clarification Exercise

All of the following values are worthwhile. Put a check mark next to the TEN most important to you. You may write in other values if your top values are not on this list. After checking off your top TEN choices, circle FIVE that are most important to you.

____ACHIEVEMENT (sense of accomplishment by means of skills, practice, perseverance, etc.)
____ADVANCEMENT (Moving forward in your career through promotions)
____AESTHETICS (caring about harmony and appreciating the beauty of ideas, things, etc.)
____AUTONOMY (working independently, determine the nature of your work without significant
                direction from others)
____CHANGE & VARIETY (varied, frequently changing work responsibilities and/or setting)
____COMPETITION (Pit your abilities against others where there is clear win/lose outcomes)
____CREATIVITY (being imaginative, innovative)
____FAMILY HAPPINESS (being able to spend quality time / develop family relationships)
____FRIENDSHIP (develop close personal and collegial relationships)
____HEALTH (Physical and psychological well-being)
____HELP OTHERS (be involved in helping people in a direct way, individually or in a group.)
____HELP SOCIETY (do something to contribute to the betterment of the world)
____INTEGRITY (sincerity and honesty)
____KNOWLEDGE/WISDOM (understanding gained through study and experience)
____LEISURE (have time for hobbies, sports, activities and interests)
____LOCATION (place conducive to your lifestyle and allows you to do the things you enjoy)
____LOYALTY (steadfastness and allegiance)
____PLEASURE (seeking enjoyment and gratification)
____POWER (authority)
____PRESTIGE (status, a high level of standing among others)
____RECOGNITION (getting acknowledged for your contribution)
____SPIRITUALITY (seeking inner harmony, loyalty to one's beliefs)
____STABILITY/SECURITY (being certain, sure of something, not likely to change soon)
____TEAMWORK (working together productively and cooperatively)
____WEALTH (Profit, gain, making a lot of money)
____ _____
____ _____

The five values that are most important to you:
1._____
2._____
3._____
4._____
5._____

Interests

The following activities/topics are of interest to many people. Circle any that interest you. **Do not worry whether or not there seems to be any direct connection to a career.** The list is not exhaustive, so use your imagination and add any interest you have which is not listed.

Drawing
Gardening/Horticulture
Tennis
Bird-watching
Construction
Research
Education
Travel
Camping
Photography
Religion
Counseling
Health Care
Chemical Abuse
Rehabilitation
Foreign Languages
Consumer Advocacy
Climbing
Urban Planning
Animals
Automobiles
Mathematics
Finance
Innovations

Television
Human Rights
Investments
Criminal Justice
Cooking
Writing
Design
Politics
Carpentry
Music
Dance
Selling
World Hunger
Home decorating
Architecture
Transportation
Yoga
Environmental Issues
Computer Technology
Sewing
Law
International Affairs
Labor-Employee
Relations

Stamp Collecting
Electronic Equipment
Back-packing
Driving
Theater
Aerospace
Outer-space
Energy
Sports
Video games
Landscaping
Scuba Diving
Aviation
Real Estate
History
Military Affairs
Science
Others:_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Review those you have circled and develop a prioritized list of those interests, which if possible, you would like to directly connect to your work.

1._____
2._____
3._____
4._____
5._____

What are Your Interests?

1. What are your favorite hobbies? What do you do in your free time?

2. What do you love to talk about?

3. What magazines or newspapers do you love to read? And what subjects do you like to read about?

4. What sections of the bookstore do you tend to gravitate toward?

5. What sites on the Internet do you tend to gravitate toward?

6. If you watch TV, and it's a game show, which categories would you pick? If it's an educational program, what kinds of subjects do you stop and watch?

Summary

List Your Top Five Interests:
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Self-Assessment Summary

My Skill Summary:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

The Five Values that are the Most Important to me:

1._____
2._____
3._____
4._____
5._____

My Top Five Interests:

1._____
2._____
3._____
4._____
5._____

After completing your personal inventory, take a step back and look at the big picture. What patterns do you see? Do any occupations come to mind? Show this summary to other individuals, both family and friends, and ask them what occupational areas come to mind.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Self-assessment is a process that is ongoing. Feel free to make an appointment with a Career Counselor and discuss what you do or do not see in your self-assessment. If you would like to explore further, ask about the Strong Interest Inventory and the Myers Briggs Type Indicator.

Example

Self-Assessment Summary

My Skill Summary:
I seek a position which communicating both written and verbal is central; specifically, I am good at researching and compiling primary and disparate information into a cohesive report form. I can write in both explanatory and persuasive form/materials. I am comfortable in a multi-cultural setting and have ability to co-ordinate people from many different backgrounds. I enjoy traveling and researching "on-site" in archives and museums.

The Five Values that are the Most Important to me:

1.____Family happiness
2.___ Friendship
3.___Help society
4.___Knowledge/Wisdom
5.___Autonomy/Creativity

My Top Five Interests:

1.__Travel/research/history
2.__Studying culture/belief systems/mythology
3._ Movies
4.__Gardening/museums
5.__Reading

After completing your personal inventory, take a step back and look at the big picture. What patterns do you see? Do any occupations come to mind? Show this summary to other individuals, both family and friends, and ask them what occupational areas come to mind.

- Teaching
- Diplomacy/governmental
- Travel & Research
- Foreign liaison for an international corporation
- Museum fellow (teaching-researcher)
- Mediator

Self-assessment is a process that is ongoing. Feel free to make an appointment with a Career Counselor and discuss what you do or do not see in your self-assessment. If you would like to explore further, ask about the Strong Interest Inventory and the Myers Briggs Type Indicator.

Working Conditions/Work Setting Preferences

Below is a list of factors characterizing working conditions. These factors should always be taken into consideration when considering career goals because our preferences for or against certain job settings and job traits can affect our enjoyment of and success in a given position. What working conditions do you prefer and in which you perform best? Circle those factors that are important to you.

High pressure

Relaxed atmosphere

Work alone

Work with a team

Close to home

Urban setting

Suburban setting

Rural setting

Large company Small company

Work in a variety of office locations

Work outside in nature

Work in one office

Travel

Focus on single task

Perform multiple tasks

Oversee a project

Carry out specific task only

Flexible hours

Regular hours

8–5 day

Work at home

Creative/progressive/innovative co.

Conservative/well-structured hierarchy

Supervise others

Compete with others

Your own office

Common, shared work space

Incentive opportunities

Union

Non-union

Professional

Reputation

Co-workers at same educational level

Review those preferences you have circled and develop a prioritized list below:

1._____   2._____

3._____   4._____

5._____

What settings would you want to be sure to avoid?

1._____   2._____

3._____   4._____

5._____

Do you have a geographical preference or requirement?

_____

_____

Functional Areas

In order to begin the necessary exploration, it is helpful to identify functional areas whereby jobs are grouped in terms of activities and responsibilities. Listed below are categories of employment. Mark those functions for which you want to gather more information.

Administration
Educational Administration
Legal
Government Relations
Office Management

Finance
Accounting
Commercial Banking
Corporate Finance
Credit Management
Investment Banking
Security Analysis

Human Resources
Compensation & Benefits
Conflict Resolution
Employee & Labor Relations
Recruiting
Training & Development
Diversity Management

Marketing & Sales
Advertising
Corporate Brand Management
Marketing Operations
Market Research
Merchandising / Buying
Product Management
Promotions
Direct Sales
Telemarketing
Graphic Design

Communications
Broadcasting
Corporate Communications
Investor Relations
Journalism
Media & Event Planning
Public Relations

Consulting
Corporate Training &
   Development Function
Specific Consulting:
   Marketing, Finance, Human
   Resources, Operations,
   Career, etc.
Leadership Development
Management Consulting
Organizational Development
Personal Consulting
Strategy Consulting

Computers / Information Systems
Database Management
Network Administration
Programming
Quality Assurance
Software / Hardware /
   Systems Administration
   & Development
Technical Support

Operations
Engineering

Research & Development
Production
Purchasing

Other Business
Business Development
Customer Service
Distribution
Facilities Management
Logistics
Manufacturing / Production
Product Training & Support
Project Management
Purchasing / Receiving
Quality Assurance
Real Estate / Property
   Management
Regulatory Affairs /
   Compliance
Supply Chain Management
Travel & Tourism

Human Services
Community Development
Counseling
Mediation
Ministerial Services
Psychology
Public Interest Work
Social Work
Teaching
Volunteer Coordination

Health / Medical Services
Dentistry
Nursing
Occupational Therapy
Optometry
Pharmacy
Physical Therapy
Physician

Protective Services
Corrections
Federal, Local, State
Law Enforcement
Military
Private Security

Education / Teaching
Academic Advising
Administration
Counseling
Personal Development:
   Recovery, Dieting,
   Stop-Smoking
   Programs
School Psychology
Student Services
Teaching

Other Professional Specialties
Sciences
   Computer
   Life
   Physical
   Social

Other: _____

Review those categories that you have marked and list by priority those functional areas you would be interested in exploring:

1. _____   3. _____
2. _____   4. _____

My Action Plan

What do I need to do to bring me closer to making a career decision?

Goal(s):   _____

_____

_____

Activity	Target Date	Completed ☑

Example

My Action Plan

What do I need to do to bring me closer to making a career decision?

Goal(s):   *Identify alternative career goals*

Activity	Target Date	Completed ☑
Complete self-assessment exercises and summary	11/14	
Consult with friends and family to help brainstorm a list of viable occupations based on self-assessment summary	11/19	
Make appointment with career counselor to discuss career decision-making concerns	11/21	
Research potential occupations: Mediator, museum fellow and diplomat	Winter 200x	
Conduct two or more informational interviews for each occupation. Utilize Career Connection database	Winter 200x	
Attend resume writing workshop and develop resume	3/26	
Practice interviewing skills. Attend interview technique and practice interviewing workshops	4/2	