

FACULTY AS CAREER COUNSELORS

While it may not be clearly evident, teachers play an important role in their students' career choices. This domain is not the exclusive responsibility of a career services office, as many would suspect. Rather, all those with whom students come in contact during their college education, and especially teachers, have great influence on re-confirming a student's career choice, presenting alternative options, or guiding the undecided toward a decision.

The following are some junctures at which career options may become part of the course's fabric:

Materials

- Materials may be selected to represent diverse points of view based on the authors' areas of specialization.
- Relationships between theory and applications are stressed to illustrate diverse models of application based on discipline, field of specialization etc.
- Assignments are structured to let students examine information and present results from diverse professional points of view. This is an especially effective strategy for research assignments and group projects.

Example: students studying chemistry may be interested in a variety of health care professions, genetic research, environmental policy etc. A single topic may be researched and examined from their preferred points of view.

Example: students studying composition may write and present an assignment as a newspaper reporter, a technical writer, or a fiction writer may write.

Interaction

- The teacher serves as a role model on two levels --- as a teacher and as a professional in the specific discipline.
- Guest teachers brought in to teach portions of the course or to show first-hand how the information can be applied in the 'real world', can be selected to represent a broad spectrum of relevant professions.
- As part of their assignments, students may be required to interview people in relevant fields.
- Students can participate in professional internships, even very short in duration, in several related fields.

A course can incorporate a structured Service Learning component that would expose students to a variety of professions related to the subject of the course.