

# CAREER PLANNING

## Self Assessment:

### What is the value of this process?

As you begin exploring career options, it will be important to be well-aware of your interests, skills, values and attributes.

This information will help you to evaluate whether or not, with the appropriate training, you would be a good match for a particular career. As you apply for summer jobs, internships, part-time jobs and career opportunities, you can use this information to promote relevant strengths to prospective employers.

## The Self-Assessment Process

What *skills* do you possess that would make you an effective employee?

- Brainstorm a list of these skills.
- Include all that come to mind.
- Ask family and friends for their input.
- Review past job evaluation forms and letters of recommendation.
- What skills were mentioned to describe you?

### Sample Transferable Skills:

Organizational	Problem-solving
Communication	Research
Interpersonal	Writing
Leadership	Computer
Analytical	Management
Decision-making	Coordination

In your career exploration process, pay attention to the characteristics suggested as essential for success in the career fields of special interest to you.

How do your attributes match those required in specific careers? Is there reason to feel that you have the essentials it takes to succeed? Or should you focus your interests and energies elsewhere?

How can you make use of the attributes you possess to promote yourself as a candidate for an internship or part-time or full-time job?

What positive *attributes* do you possess that would make you an effective employee?

- Brainstorm a list of these characteristics. What adjectives describe you?
- Include all positive attributes that come to mind.
- Ask family and friends for their input.
- Review past job evaluation forms and recommendations.
- What adjectives were used to describe you?

**Sample Attributes:**

Flexible	Organized
Honest	Creative
Adaptable	Self-motivated
Reliable	Enthusiastic
Committed	Conscientious

As you begin or continue in the career exploration process, pay attention to the characteristics suggested as essential for success in the career fields of special interest to you.

How do your attributes match those required in specific careers? Is there reason to feel that you have the essentials it takes to succeed? Or should you focus your interests and energies elsewhere?

How can you make use of the attributes you possess to promote yourself as a candidate for an internship or part-time or full-time job?

What do you value most in life? What do you find most rewarding to you?  
How might your values influence your career choice(s)?  
How do your values match career(s) you are currently considering?

Below is a brief list of values that can be associated with careers and work environments. Which do you value most?

Achievement	Leisure time
Advancement	Location
Autonomy / Independence	Personal Growth
Competition	Power
Creativity	Recognition
Environment	Stability
Helping others	Status
High income	Travel

Improving society

Variety

Influencing others

Working independently

Leadership

Working with others

Once you have determined what you value, consider prioritizing these values beginning with what is of most importance to you.

Keep these values in mind as you explore careers. Focus on careers that best match your skills, interests and values.

Which of these relate most or might be most valued for the job/career for which you are applying/preparing?

How else might you use these characteristics to promote yourself to a prospective employer?

» Decision-making **You have more control over your future than you might think!**

Through your effort, energy and positive attitude, and our help, you can gather all the information and experience you need to make the best decision for you.

### **What are you going to major in?**

You've probably been asked this question more than you care to remember! While this is an important question, it is one that does not need an immediate answer.

At Avila we encourage you to learn more about yourself, career options, and labor trends before you make a decision about your major. Research shows that many students who declare a major as they enter college change their mind two or three times before graduation.

Avila's advising system, core requirements and Career Services are designed to assist and support you as you explore your options. Read on and find out what's ahead. Enroll at Avila, and we'll help to guide you through the process!

### **A chance to learn more about yourself and your options...**

It's not unusual for students not to know from the start exactly what they want to do when they graduate. How well do you know yourself? How do you know what to study? What will you do well in and enjoy?

At Avila, our premise is that you will only learn the answer to these questions from experience and exposure to a variety of fields and courses. Except with a few majors

such as Nursing, Radiologic Science, and Education, students can take two to three semesters to declare their major.

### **Time to build breadth as well as depth...**

Recruiters interviewing graduating seniors for entry-level positions as well as for graduate schools and professional studies always stress the importance of academic success.

They also emphasize, however, the need for strong communication skills, critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. The semesters you use to explore your values, interests, academic and career options will help you to develop these skills and determine your major area of focus. This exploration will also help you to make more thoughtful and informed decisions relating to your major and future career path by providing opportunities for: academic advising, interest assessment, and career exploration.

### **Avila's advising system and core requirements...**

As a new student, you will receive individualized attention from one of our faculty advisors who will guide and assist you in developing your course of study.

According to your special interests, you will select your first 45 credit hours from about 150 different "core" courses representing the [variety of academic areas](#) you may pursue in depth later in your college career. Our "core" encourages underclassmen to sample and explore the humanities and natural sciences, and the arts, while developing valuable life-long skills.

### **Getting to know yourself...**

If you are a full-time first year student, you will automatically have opportunities to explore your personality, values, skills and career interests through your First year seminar.

This ten-week program is designed to assist you with your transition to college as well as with your self-awareness, goal-setting, and career planning. If you are a part-time student or transfer, you are also encouraged to learn more about yourself and how your values, interests and abilities relate to specific career areas.

Career Services offers an on-line career assessment tool called, ["Do What You Are"](#) to assist you in learning more about yourself. Values clarification exercises are also available to help you in your career decision-making process.

### **Exploring career options...**

Research your options by reviewing resources such as the [Occupational Outlook Handbook](#), which you can link to right here! Gather more information by conducting an informational interview with Avila's faculty, alumni and other professionals in the Kansas City area who can act as mentors by sharing their expertise and first-hand knowledge of a field.

### **Taking advantage of opportunities to build your skills...**

Opportunities for practical learning include volunteer experiences, part-time and summer employment, cooperative education and internships. Each of these experiences can help you to develop your skills and expand your knowledge. Hundreds of employment opportunities and job leads are available annually through our Career Services office. You may also choose to participate in the [Employer Fair](#) held each fall. Through our job postings, volunteer opportunities and additional contacts you may obtain work experience, or work through your academic department to arrange an internship for credit. Take advantage of the opportunity to gain knowledge and skills by experiencing a career or work environment first hand. Learn and develop marketable experience by real life involvement in fields of special interest to you.

### **Deciding on a major...**

Once you have sampled courses from a number of academic areas, and have learned more about yourself and your career options, you will be better informed and prepared to declare a major. Except with a few majors such as Nursing, Radiologic Science, and Education, you can take two to three semesters to declare your major. After doing so, you will be assigned to an advisor from that particular department.

### **And moving on...**

No matter what major you select, you will want to work closely with your advisor to develop a practical course of study. Remember that including some computer and business courses in your college curriculum can increase your marketability upon graduation. Keep in mind the need to gain experience. This will help you to compete successfully as you seek to enter the professional world.

While recruiters are impressed by "good grades," most admit that grades aren't everything. They are interested in well-rounded applicants with strong communication and critical thinking skills. Campus and community involvement and leadership experience increase your marketability.

And, again, the value of related internships or part-time jobs cannot be underestimated!

### **Approaching graduation...**

No later than the beginning of your senior year you may want to seek assistance in refining your résumé, planning your job search strategies, and fine-tuning your interview skills. Our Career Services office has a list of Internet web sites, videos, books and self-help sheets to guide you through the process. You also have the option of meeting with our career counselor for individual assistance.

Web sites you may find helpful...

<http://www.avila.edu/careers/ratings.asp>

It is a process through which you chart a course of career-related action, but one that changes with the times and circumstances, as well as with your skills, abilities, values, and needs.

### **What are the benefits of career planning?**

#### **Career planning helps you:**

- make *informed choices*
- decide the *kinds of jobs* you want
- determine the *skills* that are necessary
- discover *ways to gain those skills*
- find a career or field to which you are best suited
- be more *committed* to your career
- increase your *self-confidence*
- get *more of what you want out of life*

[Click here for career planning and exploration internet sites](#)

### **Career Assessment Tool**

Most college students are not sure from the start what they want to major in or what career they plan to pursue. At Avila we understand that and want to help our students to begin to define and develop or confirm a realistic career choice and plan. For this purpose we offer an on-line career assessment tool called, "Do What You Are." While this tool will be integrated into First Year Seminar, it is available for use by all Avila students and graduates.

As Human eSource says, "This program is based on Personality Type - the innate way people naturally see the world and make decisions - a set of basic drives and motivations that remain constant throughout a person's life. Learning about their Personality Type provides students with accurate and invaluable insights satisfying college and career decisions."

It takes about thirty minutes for most people to complete the assessment. You can take the assessment at your convenience at home, in your residence hall, or in the computer lab. A comprehensive report is available over the internet or for discussion during a follow-up appointment with a Career Services staff member.

If you are in the decision-making mode regarding your major or future career, consider taking advantage of this assessment tool by clicking on this link.



Current students will need their Student ID and Avila e-mail address to gain access to the assessment. Alumni need to call Career Services at 816.501.2901 to obtain access.

We are confident that this tool will provide you with greater insight into your strengths and challenges and help you to identify appropriate career options. It has the potential to make you a better learner and a person who is focused on a career that is a good match for your personality, skills and interests.