

Improving Career Decision-Making Through Student Driven Assignments

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Think and Do.



Presentation Objectives



- Understand the transition from Career Connections to Career Exploration Project (CEP)
- Identify the impact on students exploration
- Develop strategies for implementing your own CEP

NC State University



- Public/Research I Land-Grant Institution
- Roughly 36,000 students
 - approx. 24,000 undergrad
- 47% female, 86% In-State
- 9 degree-granting Colleges, over 100 majors

Exploratory Studies

- Admit 700-750 students annually
- First-year exploratory students
- Three pillars of the program
 - Year-long freshman seminar
 - Academic Advising
 - Living Learning Village



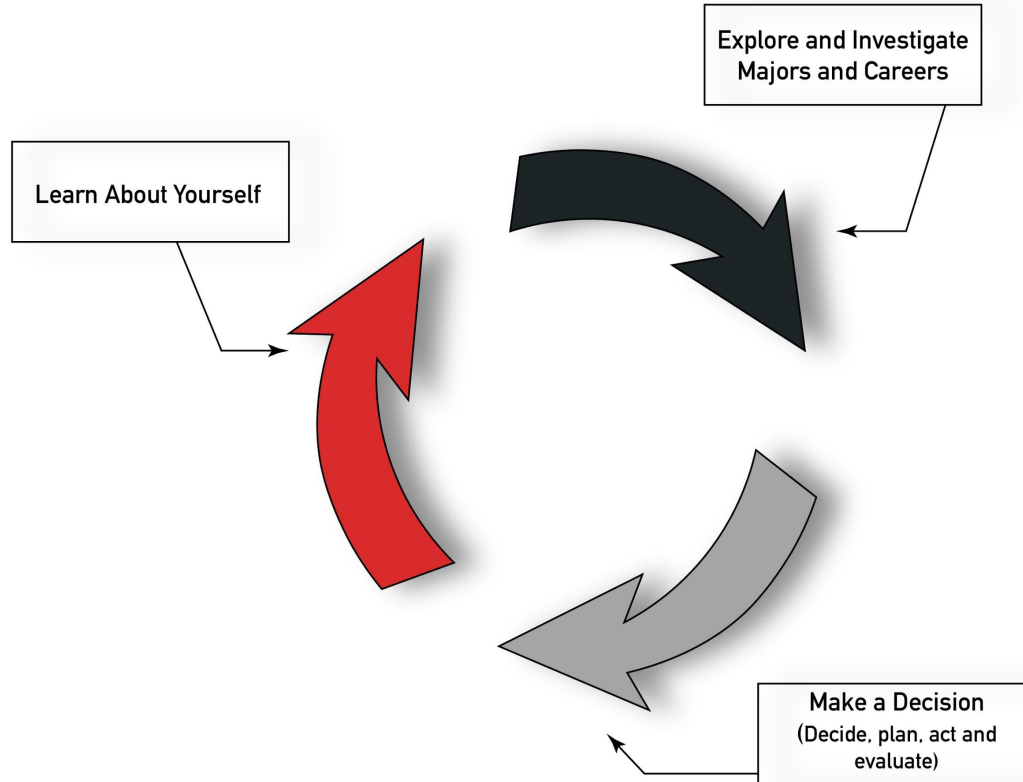
USC 101 (Fall)

- Adjustment to college
- Major Exploration
- Campus Community
- Academic Success

USC 102 (Spring)

- Continued Major Exploration
- Career Exploration & Preparation
- Transitioning to a major
- Decision Making Process/Skills

Major and Career Decision Making



The Major and Career Decision-Making Framework is the intellectual property of the University College Exploratory Studies Program.

Career Connections History

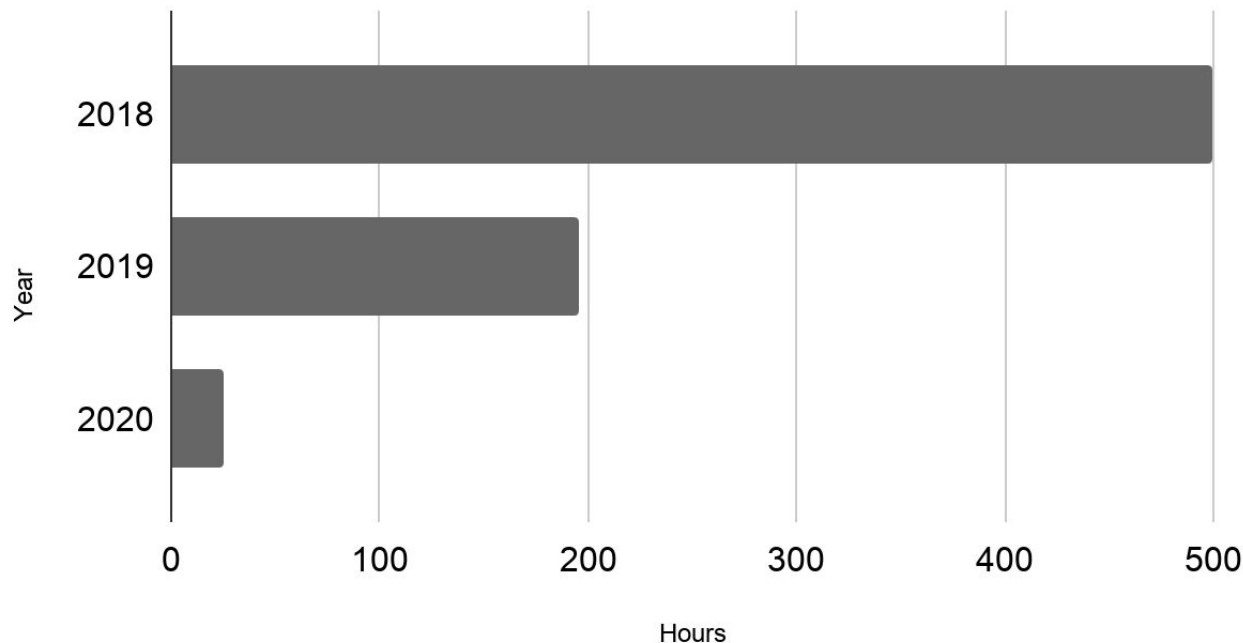
- 10 years ago - panel event to explore careers by College/Major
- Changed to explore careers by career fields without Major focus
- At a one-day resource intensive event with 75 panelists and 900 students in attendance
- Signature program for our department
- 2019: Redesigned as the Career Exploration Project

Historical Challenges

- Space
- Staff time
- Not meeting the breadth of student needs
- Varied levels of student engagement

Resources and Staff Hours

Staff Hours by Year



2021:

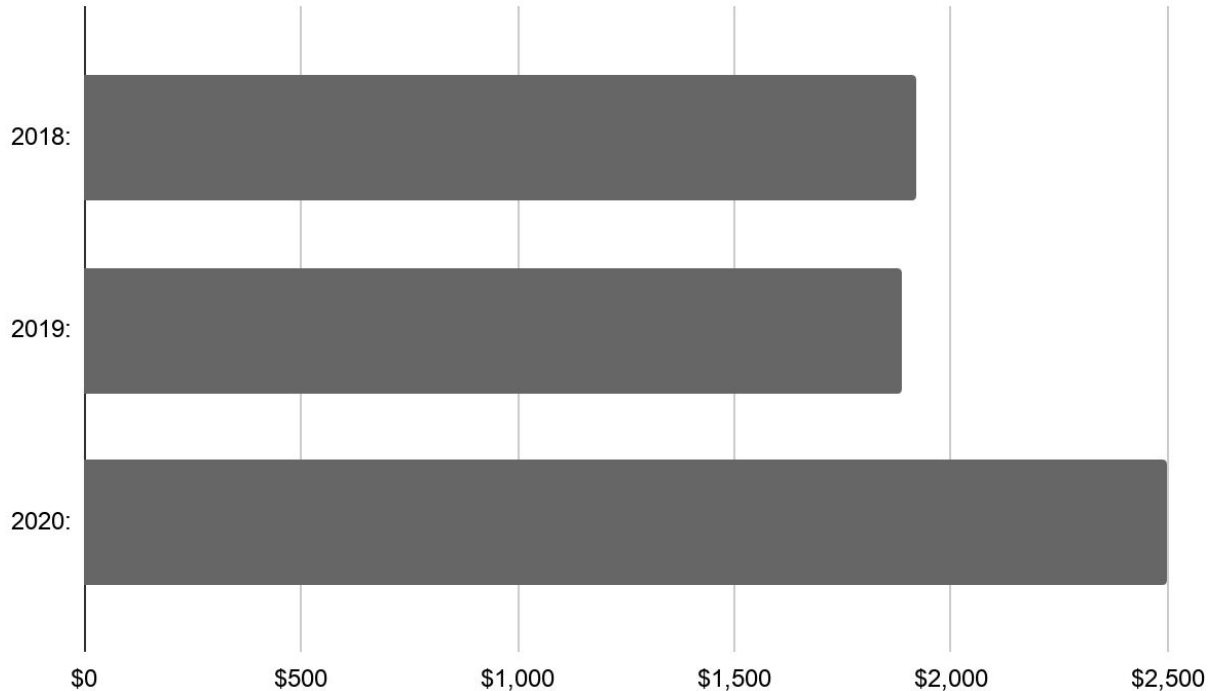
- Integrate CEP into the work of our standing Curriculum Committee
- Reallocate CEP staff to other projects

Budget

2018: \$1920

2019: \$1888

2020: \$2500



Career Exploration Project (CEP)

The purpose of this assignment is to allow students to

- explore careers and gain knowledge of career fields
- desired and necessary skills for the workforce
- what employers are looking for in today's market

Redesigned Career Exploration Project

Student select 1-2 options that allows them to broaden their knowledge and help make an informed decision

Options:

- Career Informational Interview
- Job Shadow
- Externship
- Employer Information Session
- Career Speaker
- Career Panels
- Career Videos

Career Exploration Strategies

- What structures exist on our campus that we can leverage and connect to
- Options for students at varied levels of decidedness
 - More decided = job shadow
 - Less decided = career path videos
 - Workforce skills = employer info sessions
- See the variety of career paths

Option 1: Career Informational Interview

- All our students do one Career Informational Interview and can do a second one for CEP.
- Second can be a referral or to explore a contrasting career area.
- Helps students expand their current network.

Option 2: Job Shadow

- Can be a referral from the first Career Informational Interview.
- Goal to experience the world of work first hand with low stakes.
- Expectation for a 3 hour time commitment for all students who select this option.

Option 3: Externship

- An employer site visit for 4 hours to learn about a company and career field.
- Organized through our Career Development Center and Living Learning Community.
- In Spring 2019 twelve of our students visited a Coca Cola plant near campus.

Option 4: Employer Information Session

- Employers come to campus coordinated by our Career Development Center.
- Opportunity for students to hear what different companies do, what they are looking for in new employees, and how to prepare for the workplace.

Option 5: Career Speaker

- Academic Colleges bring speakers to campus.
- Example: Poole College of Management Wells Fargo Executive Leadership Series

Option 6: Career Panels

- 10 panelists and 200 students over two days. Business and Engineering focused panels.
 - Students were self-selecting to attend which lead to more engagement.
 - Student were able to speak with panelists without being rushed and in smaller groups.

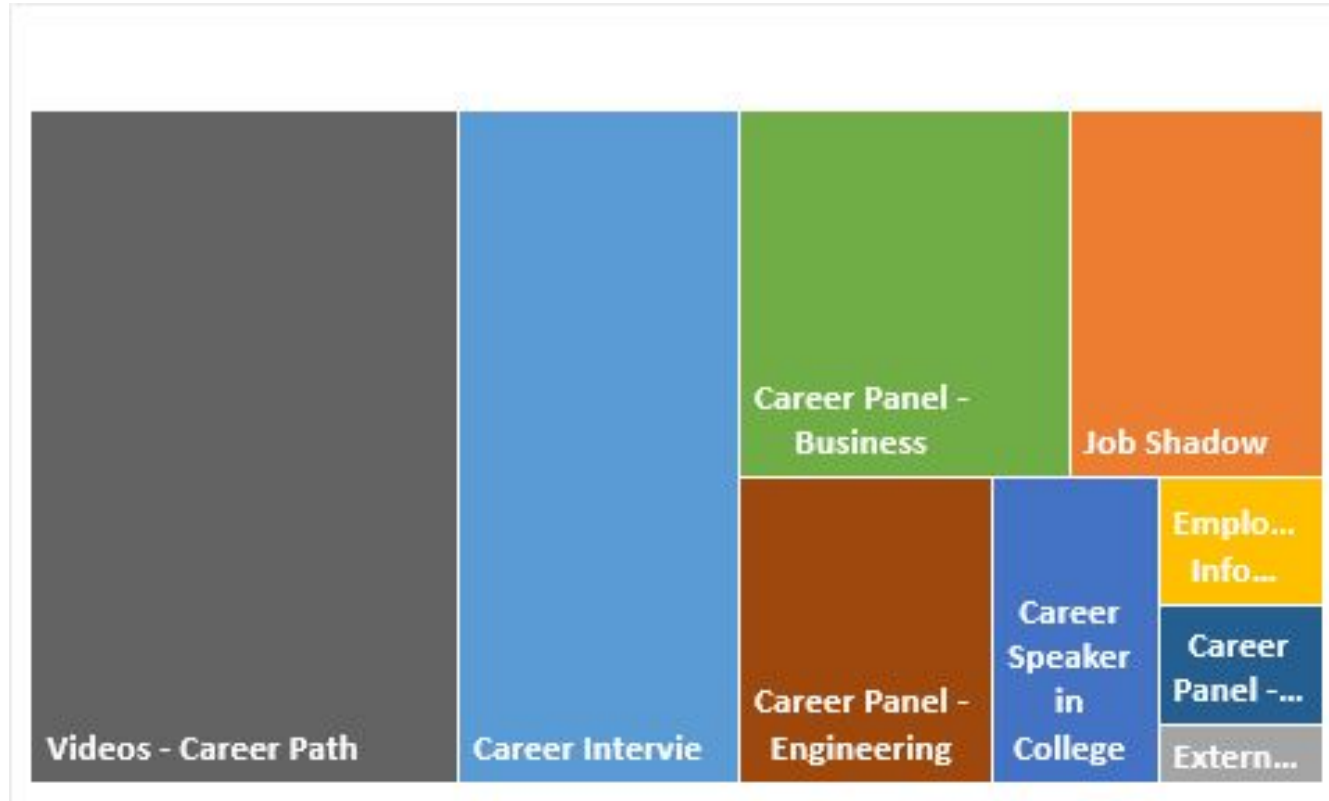
Option 7: Career Videos

- Student watched 5 videos
- Completed reflection questions
- Each video was 7-10 minutes long including an overview the profession, how they got there, skills required and advice for students

Career Path Videos database

- We and the academic advisors in our office leveraged our own networks of friends, family, parents, alumni, and former students to create a collection of career path videos.
- We built a database of about 55 videos and added additional videos from our University Library database.
- All videos were linked from one Moodle page making them easy to find for students.

Options by Student Choice



Students Feedback

89%

strongly agreed or agreed that the CEP helped them consider their personal values, interests, and abilities in relation to my major/career exploration.

81.17%

strongly agreed or agreed that the CEP enhanced their ability to make a decision(s) around their major/career exploration.

Students Qualitative Feedback

“This assignment was **very helpful and creative** as well. It forces students to get involved, meet people, and learn about themselves and what they want to pursue as a career. It is one of the **first steps in the 4 years that will set you up for the next 40.**”

“It was **so valuable to be able to speak with people in the profession** I’m interested in. Being able to actually see and experience the type of work people do through job shadows/interviews is a fantastic way to see if the career path is for you. **This project is what ultimately made me decide** I want to pursue becoming a physician assistant.”

Instructor Feedback

“Compared to last year's event, the CEP seemed to leave a much greater impact on our students. The reflections they shared in their responses were qualitatively much more detailed and there was a greater focus on how the CEP impacted their thinking about potential academic and career paths.”

Panelist Feedback

80%

of panelists agreed that students were engaged, compared to 62% in previous years.

100%

of panelists were glad they participated in the event, compared to 97% in previous years

Challenges

- Depending on the resources of a decentralized campus
- Collecting career path videos from our network

How we used this information

- Improve our assessments to hone in on what experiences were most impactful for today's students.
- Reallocate the funds back into our students with tools such as the purchase of resources for major/career exploration.
- Build partnerships, enhance our global reach, and expose students to unique career paths.

Surprise Outcomes

- Increased parent engagement
 - 2019-2020 New Student Orientation we recruited parents to make videos and sign up for Career Informational Interviews
- Alumni connections
- Training tool for advisors

CEP Year 2

- Used assessment data to make the assignment more user-friendly for instructors & students
- We wanted to ensure continued alignment with the department/class outcomes

Improvements for Year 2

Year 1

- Seven options for students to choose from
- Reflection questions varied depending on what student selected

Year 2

- Reduced to three options
- Reflection questions are more streamlined and tailored to remaining options

CEP Year 2 Options

- Career Information Interview
- Job Shadow
- Career Portfolio

Career Portfolio

- More enhance version of Career Path Video option using VirtualJobShadow.com (VJS)
- What students need to complete in VJS:
 - Holland Code Assessment
 - Watch five videos that align with their Holland Codes
 - Informational Career Journals (2)
 - Reflection Questions

Questions

Next: Brainstorming Time

Brainstorming Time

1. What do your students need?
2. Think about a program you have identified challenges with.
How can you improve it or implement something new?
3. Identify campus partners to collaborate with
4. How to leverage your network for students benefit

Contact Us!

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Please remember to submit your
evaluation on Guidebook!



#FYE20