**Holland Codes and Careers Assignment- Faculty Instructions**

**Module 1: The Career Planning Process: An Overview**

This assignment will give students the opportunity to either start exploring career options or to check how well their chosen career path fits with how they see themselves.

In this module, students completed a brief “Guess Your Holland Personality Type” activity, in which they read short descriptions of each of the six types and selected three types they felt best described them. While this was FAR from a formal career or personality type assessment, it still provided students with a chance to think about their personality characteristics. While not all students are able to guess their type correctly, many are reasonably accurate in their guesses due to the simple, straightforward nature of Holland’s theory.

Holland Types provide an easy method of career matching. The personality types identify key personality characteristics that correspond with characteristics of careers and work environments. The theory states that an individual will be the happiest and most successful in an occupation that’s characteristics most closely match the individual’s personality characteristics. An individual is usually given a 3-letter code, and occupations are assigned a code as well. These occupational codes used to be published in a large book called the Dictionary of Holland Occupational Codes, but are now published electronically on the US Department of Labor site, O\*NET, instead. In theory, the best-fitting career is the career that’s code most closely matches the individual’s code (but there can be exceptions to that, of course, so in working with a student one-on-one in career counseling, we would identify the specific characteristics of each Holland Type a student has and work on matching those individual characteristics with characteristics of careers). For more background information on the theory, see the student instructions.

In this assignment, students will take the 3-letter code they guessed fit them best in the module, and enter it into O\*NET, generating various lists of potential careers. The student instructions, in addition to providing critical background information, walk students step-by-step through entering their Holland Code information on the website. At the end of this process, students will turn in a summary paper (you may wish to change the length requirement or add additional criteria) addressing prompts that are included in the assignment instructions.

**Holland Codes and Careers Assignment- Student Instructions**

**Module 1: The Career Planning Process: An Overview**

This assignment will give you a chance to do one of two things:

* *If you are currently undecided about a career*, you’ll get to explore career options that could potentially be a good fit for your interests and personality.
* *If you’ve already chosen a career*, you’ll be able to verify whether the characteristics of that career make it a good fit for your personality type.

***Assignment Overview:*** You will use the Holland Type you chose for yourself in the “Guess Your Holland Personality Type” activity in this module to look up careers that potentially match your personality type on the website, O\*NET. You will then write a brief paper summarizing your findings. Detailed instructions are on the second page.

**What You Need to Know about Holland’s Theory of Career Choice**

Dr. John Holland said that an individual’s personality characteristics correspond to characteristics of different occupations and work environments, and that a person will be happiest and most successful in an occupation that’s characteristics most closely match the individual’s personality characteristics. Nearly all career assessments today use this theory to match people with careers.

He identified 6 core personality types; however, he recognized that most people will not fit *fully* into any one type, which is why you were asked to choose 3 of the 6 personality types in the activity. Most students have a dominant type - 1 of the 6 that is more like them than the rest, but also share some characteristics with a couple of the other types as well. The characteristics you possess of each of these types come together to make up your unique personality type, represented by a 3-letter code. The letters used in the code are just the first letter in the name of each of the types.

Just as you have a code representing your personality characteristics, careers have been assigned codes as well representing the typical characteristics of that career. In theory, the career that’s code is the most similar to your personality code will be the best-fitting career for you; however, there are certainly exceptions to this depending on *which* characteristics you have from each of your 3 types, so if you don’t feel your career matches really fit you, see a career counselor at the Career Center.

**Hint for Finding Careers that Fit Your Type**

When you’re undecided on a career, use the 1st letter in your code (the type you selected as “most like you”) to identify a general direction to look in. For example, if your first letter is E (Enterprising), you will most likely want an occupation that falls mainly under the Enterprising category. Your 2nd letter will then help you to narrow down the list of all Enterprising careers, as the secondary characteristics of a career can make them very different from one another, even though they are all in the Enterprising category. For example, E careers with a second letter of A (Artistic) will require a creative, flexible personality type, while E careers with a second letter of C (Conventional) will require the opposite – someone who prefers having a set structure and working with things that are black and white. Your 3rd letter will often tell you more about the context of your work rather than the job itself. For example, if your third letter is S (Social), you may want to work for an organization that helps people in some way or gives back to the community, so you feel good about what you do even though you do not directly help people. Or, you might just want a job that allows for interacting with others.

**Type Refresher**

**Realistic** people (R) are ***doers***. They enjoy hands-on, physical activities such as building or repairing, or playing sports.

**Investigative** people (I) are ***thinkers***. They enjoy analyzing, problem solving, and learning about new things.

**Artistic** people (A) are ***creators***. They enjoy creating things or ideas, and being able to express themselves in what they do.

**Social** people (S) are ***helpers***. They enjoy working with people in a helping capacity. They are motivated by the idea of making a difference.

**Enterprising** people (E) are ***leaders***. They enjoy working with people, being in a position to lead or persuade others, and are motivated to achieve personal success.

**Conventional** people (C) are ***organizers***. They enjoy structure, activities that require attention to detail, and working with numbers.

***Instructions:*** Follow the steps below, which will guide you through how to use your type to generate career options on O\*NET, as well as what you will need to write about in the summary paper you will turn in. Your paper should be at least 2 pages in length.

1. Go to O\*NET: <http://www.onetonline.org/>. This is a US Department of Labor site for career information on every type of job that currently exists.
2. Under the “Advanced Search” section, select “Interests” from the drop down menu and click the arrow button.
3. On this page, you will see the 6 Holland Types. Click on the type you selected as “most like you.” This will bring up all occupations (as classified by the US Department of Labor) that are primarily the type you selected.
4. The numbers you see under “Job Zone” indicate the approximate level of education or training typically required. A “4” is usually bachelor’s degree level, with lower numbers requiring less education and higher numbers requiring more. If you wish to filter your results by Job Zone at some point, you may, but be aware this may limit your results.
5. Clicking on any job title will take you to information about that career (including the full Holland Code).
6. **Address the following in your paper:** What was your initial reaction to the careers that came up for the type you thought was most like you? (Remember that not all careers categorized primarily under your first letter are going to be a good fit for you… that is why we use additional letters to narrow this list down. You should, however, see some that sound appealing and notice themes in the careers listed that make sense for your personality type.) Overall, do the types of careers that came up seem like they would fit you? Why or why not? If the answer is no, do you think you picked the wrong type as “most like you?”
7. At the top of the page, you will see the option to select a second and third type from drop down menus. Enter only your second type for now (in combination with your first), then click “Go.” You will now see letters appearing in the “Interests” column, and you will notice that it is showing you ALL combinations of the two letters you put in. From the drop down menu next to where it says “Interests,” select the correct order of your letters. (You can also play around with different combinations of the letters in your code later if you like.)
8. After studying the options that came up for your first two letters, enter your third letter, following the same steps as above. Be aware that entering your third letter may drastically reduce the number of results shown. Do not panic if you do not get many results for all three letters. Remember that the third letter is usually least important and can vary within a career field based on the type of organization you work for and the specific job you have within the field. A career counselor can help you figure out how to incorporate your third letter into a career.
9. **Address the following in your paper:** When you added your second letter, did it narrow down your initial list of options in a way that made sense to you? Why or why not? How do you think your second letter might affect the type of career that fits you best? If you got results when you put in all three of your letters (in order), discuss your reaction to those careers that came up. Would they fit you? Why or why not?
10. **If you are undecided about a career, address the following in your paper:** Which of the options that came up on any of your lists would you seriously consider? Explain why. What will you do next to investigate whether one of these careers is the right path for you?
11. **If you have already chosen a career, address the following in your paper:** Did the career you have chosen come up on any of your lists? If so, which letters did it match on, and which letters did it NOT match on? If some of the letters are different, what do you think accounts for these differences between the personality type you picked for yourself and the characteristics of the career? (If your career did not come up at all for you, simply search for it and click on the title and scroll to the “Interests” section of the page to see the Holland Code.) If your career’s code is very different from yours, discuss why you think this is. Do you think you selected the wrong personality types for yourself, or is there something about the career that may not fit you?