



# Being their Guide to Major Decisions: Career Advising the Undecided Student

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# Today's Agenda

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- Understand the differences between career counseling and career advising.
- Gain an understand of the undecided student.
- Identify the knowledge and skills required to be an effective career advisor.
- Learn about career advising techniques to assist in their decision-making.
- Apply our knowledge to case studies.
- Questions/Follow-Up

What career advice do you wish you had received during your first year of college?

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## Career Counseling VS. Career Advising

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- Assist students with career development problems, may be therapeutic
- Resolution of career-related problems and concerns
- Help students make academic decisions that incorporate knowledge of academic/career relationships and possibilities
- Integrating career development into academic advising



## Advising Undecided Students...why is it so hard sometimes?

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- Lack of self-awareness
- Unprepared
- Low self-esteem
- Lack of motivation
- Too much or too little parental involvement
- Varying maturity levels



# Characteristics of Undecided Students

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- Lack career awareness (i.e. options and how to explore them)
- Multiple interests and skills
- No clear interests and skills
- Complex educational and personal histories
- Uncertain about decision-making techniques
- Fearful of making the “wrong” decision
- Short term planners



# Career Advising is more important now than ever before!

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- Work is no longer a place you go; it is what you do.
- Self-Security
- The “Gig” Economy
- The shift to mastery



# Career Advising Competencies

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- Theoretical Competency
- Decision-Making Competency
- Communication Competency
- Referral Competency
- Teaching Competency
- Career Assessment Competency





# Virginia Gordon's Developmental Approach to Advising Undecided Students

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- Ask questions.
- Help the student determine why he or she is undecided.
- Help the student organize a plan for exploring.
- Help the student integrate all the information that has been collected.
- Be supportive.
- Help the student initiate an action plan.
- Encourage follow-up contact.



# Techniques that work (Individual)

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- Ideal Job Description
- Card Sorting Activities – Career Titles and Skills
- Skills sorting cards
- SDS (Holland's Codes)
- 24 Hour Review



# Techniques that work (Workshop/Small Group)

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- Ranking Values
- Attitude Assessment and Identification of Self-Sabotaging Behaviors
- Family Tree/Childhood Events
- Imagery Exercises



# Techniques that work (Classroom)

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- Lifeline Assignment
- MBTI
- Informational Interview
- Career Story Essay



# Case Study 1: Not Sure Nancy

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- Nancy is a recent high school graduate new to your college. She and her mother come to you seeking assistance in Nancy's major selection. She appears unexcited about being in college and did not give much advanced thought to this session. She was an average high school student with no favorite subjects. She did not investigate any other colleges and only attended your institution on the advice of her mother. Her mother thinks a Nursing program would be a good choice.

# Case Study 2: Lack of Motivation

## Louis

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- Louis has just finished his first year as an undecided major at your college. He has a 1.7 GPA and tells you he has no motivation for his classes because he is not sure about what he wants to major in. He thinks if he has his major declared, it will give him a goal to work toward. He has the major declaration paperwork in his hand. He wants to know what courses to take in his second year. He might be interested in an English or Philosophy major but is unsure.



## Case Study 3: Too Talented Thomas

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- Thomas just finished his first semester in the Honors program at your college. He enjoys all his academic subjects and is very gifted in math, science, writing and music. He is involved in the campus literary magazine, Math Club and Chorus. He cannot decide what to pursue as a major because his interests are so diverse. He feels pressure to decide because he has most of his general education requirements completed.

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