

WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM
REQUEST FOR APPROVAL TO USE W-DESIGNATION

LSC # 80
Action 12-5-91

TYPE I. PROFESSOR COMMITMENT

- (X) Professor: Laura Marshak Phone: 357-5686
(X) Writing Workshop? (If not at IUP, where? when? _____)
(X) Proposal for one W-course
(X) Agree to forward syllabus for subsequently offered W-courses?

SIGNATURES

Professor(s) Laura E. Marshak
Department Chairperson Christine K. Riden
College Dean John B. ...
Director of Liberal Studies ...

I. Writing Summary: RH 410, Vocational Assessment in Rehab. Counseling

Vocational Assessment in Rehabilitation is a required course which is taught each Spring and generally taken in the junior or senior year. We have chosen this course for our writing intensive course because the course objectives are best met by having students write a comprehensive vocational assessment report. The course description which follows is a modification of a model which has been used in this course for the past few years.

A. Types of Writing

In the beginning of the course, students are assigned the project of completing a comprehensive vocational assessment report. The report is to be completed in sections throughout the term; the sections assigned at any point in time correspond to the content of the curriculum being studied. For example, when class lectures and demonstrations focus on vocational interviewing, students are assigned the section of the report requiring them to describe the client's vocational history.

The comprehensive vocational assessment report requires students to engage in three different types of writing: 1) writing to clarify thinking, 2) writing to document assessment data and 3) writing to produce a vocational evaluation report similar to those used in rehabilitation agencies.

Throughout the course, students are provided with instruction regarding how to write each set of sections of the comprehensive report. The first set of several sections requires writing to clarify thinking. Students are required to think integrate information about a client and to convey their clinical impressions in a meaningful manner. This type of writing which requires students to learn how to formulate clinical impressions and substantiate them in an objective manner. The second set of sections requires technical writing which documents test results in a standard manner. This requires the students to learn precision in writing as well as the use of correct terminology used in rehabilitation reports. The third type of writing is used in producing a final report which conforms to the standards of many rehabilitation facilities. This requires students to learn how to organize diverse information about a client and to convey it in writing in an organized manner. This part of the final report also requires students to be able to write clear, meaningful treatment recommendations which are supported by the assessment data.

In addition to writing a vocational assessment report, students will engage in preliminary writing exercise. This exercise requires them to interview another student in the course and document their background history according to guidelines for writing assessment reports. The background histories will be critiqued by the professor as well as the student interviewed.

In addition to these types of writing, approximately 70% of each of three examinations will require written responses to brief essay questions.

B. Procedures

Students are assigned a set of sections of the report and are provided with instruction in class regarding this portion of report writing. Written examples are provided for sections of the report that are particularly complex. Students are requested to turn in a draft of the sections for critique by the professor. Written comments are made on the draft and it is returned without a grade to the student. This process is repeated for each of four main sections of the report. Students are expected to retain these drafts and submit them with the final report in order to document requested revisions. If a student is having considerable difficulty, they are given the opportunity to submit more than one draft of each section.

The final report is graded according to a specified criteria (see attachments) and is 40% of the final grade.

II. Course Syllabus (See pages 4-8)

III. Grading Criteria and Instructions for Report Writing (See pages 9-19)

COURSE SYLLABUS

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION

RH 410 Vocational Assessment in Rehabilitation Counseling 3 credits

Prerequisites: EX 120, RH 220, or Faculty Permission

Provides students with an overview of vocational assessment techniques and instruments for use with rehabilitation clients who are blind, deaf, mentally retarded, or severely physically handicapped. Includes discussion of the principles of measurement and testing as applied to vocational rehabilitation evaluation.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To provide students with an overview of the role of vocational assessment in the Rehabilitation process.
2. To provide students with an overview of various types of vocational assessment instruments, the general utility of these procedures in vocational assessment and career counseling, and critical issues related to their use with disabled clients.
3. To facilitate an understanding of the selection of appropriate vocational instruments for use with disabled clients. Emphasis will be placed on vocational assessment and planning with clients who are blind, deaf, mentally retarded or physically handicapped.
4. To provide instruction and practice in scoring and interpreting the results of selected vocational assessment instruments, writing vocational assessment reports, and explaining test results to clients.

III. COURSE OUTLINE

A. Fundamental Concepts (5 Sessions)

1. Career Development

Role of Career Counseling
Overview of Career Counseling Process
Role of Assessment Results in Career Counseling

2. Measurement Concepts

B. Intelligence Testing with Disabled Persons (2 Sessions)

1. Utilizing Results of Intelligence Testing

Applications in Rehabilitation
Critical Issues

- C. Interest Inventories (2 Sessions)
 - 1. Assessing vocational interests
 - 2. Applications in Rehabilitation
- D. Assessment of Aspects of Personality (2 Sessions)
 - 1. Applications in Rehabilitation
 - 2. Personality Measures
 - 3. Critical Issues Regarding Their Uses with Disabled Clients
- E. Values Inventories (1 Session)
 - 1. Use in Career Counseling
 - 2. Applications in Rehabilitation
- F. Work Samples (2 Sessions)
 - 1. Fundamental Concepts in Development
 - 2. Critique of Available Work Sample Systems
 - 3. Behavioral Observations of Performance on Work Samples
- G. Critical Vocational Behaviors (1 Session)
 - 1. Fundamental Concepts
 - 2. Application to Vocational Assessment in Rehabilitation
- H. Situational Assessment (1 Session)
 - 1. Alternatives to Psychometric Testing
 - 2. Applications in Vocational Assessments
- I. Combining Vocational Assessment Results (2 Sessions)
 - 1. Use of Test Profiles
 - 2. Integration of Test Findings with Other Information
 - 3. Interpreting Data Collected During the Vocational Assessment Process

- J. Writing Vocational Assessment Reports (2 Sessions)
 - 1. Overview of Basic Format
 - 2. Critical Issues Regarding Clinical Conclusions
- K. Interpreting Test Results to Clients (2 Sessions)
 - 1. Fundamental Concepts
 - 2. Special Considerations
 - 3. Practice Through Simulation
- L. Assessment of Sensorily Impaired Clients (1 Session)
 - 1. Vocational Assessment of Blind Clients
 - 2. Vocational Assessment of Deaf and Hearing Impaired Clients
- M. Assessment of Mentally Retarded Clients (1 Session)
- N. Issues in Career Counseling with Disabled Clients (1 Session)

This outline is based on 90 minute sessions. It totals 25 sessions; this leaves three remaining sessions for exams.

IV. EVALUATION METHODS

Evaluation of student performance will be as follows:

40% of the final grade will be based on the quality of a vocational assessment report which will be written by the student and based on his or her performance on the Career Occupational Preference System.

20% will be based on performance on Exam #1

20% will be based on performance on Exam #2

20% will be based on performance on Exam #3

V. REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS. SUPPLEMENTAL BOOKS AND READINGS

Textbook: Power, P. W., (1981). A Guide to Vocational Assessment, University Park Press, 1981.

The Career Occupational Preference System, Psychological Corporation.

VI. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Thomas, S. W., (1976). Report Writing in Assessment. Menomonie, WI: University of Wisconsin-Stout, Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute, Research and Training Center.

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Attachments
Grading Criteria
&
Instructions for Report Writing

Vocational Assessment Report: General Assignment

Overall objective: The assignment is designed to enable students to learn and demonstrate the skills needed to write a professional assessment report similar to those used in Rehabilitation. Specifically, it also provides each student with first hand experience in the interpretation of test scores, the translation of them into meaningful information, and the integration of them with other equally significant information about an individual in order to address vocational/career concerns.

There is probably no better way to understand the use of assessment procedures than to apply them to yourself; therefore, students are strongly encouraged to use their own test scores on the Career Occupational Preference System battery as the basis of the vocational assessment report. However, if a student is too uncomfortable reporting his/her own results, he/she may exercise the option of using an alternative set of test scores provided by the professor.

Overall Guidelines

1. Assume that you are the client and you have expressed concern over your career plans. You are fairly certain that you want to be in the field of rehabilitation but occasionally question how well your interests, values and abilities actually fit with your overall career plan. You know that in rehabilitation you can work in a wide variety of settings and work roles. However, you are confused regarding how to make your career choices more specific and in a manner which will help you be satisfied and successful. You are seeking an assessment in order to address these issues.
2. Score and plot the results of the COPS, COPES and CAPS in your booklet and turn these in with the final vocational assessment report so that accuracy of scoring and plotting test profiles can be checked.
3. Write a vocational assessment report based on the concerns presented in guideline #1 and your results on the COPS, COPES, and CAPS.
4. Specific guidelines and criteria for writing each section will be discussed in class.
5. The report must be clear, accurate, meaningful, typed, and free of spelling and grammatical errors. These are essentially the same expectations found in employment settings within Rehabilitation.
6. Grading will be based on a point system; with points being related to the fulfillment of specific criteria for each section as well as the quality of the report as a whole.

Grading Criteria for Assessment Reports:

- 10 pts. accuracy of reported scores
- 10 pts. adherence to guidelines for format
- 10 pts. spelling and grammar
- 10 pts. paragraph structure
- 10 pts. organization of narrative sections
- 20 pts. content of referral questions and background history
- 30 pts. content of summary and recommendations

SUPPLEMENTARY INSTRUCTIONS FOR SECTION A

Identifying Information

This section should contain the client's name and basic demographic facts which provide a concise description of characteristics which are central to understanding the client.

For example:

Jose, age 26, has been unemployed for 4 years after an accident which left him with multiple injuries. He immigrated from Mexico in 1979 and primarily speaks Spanish. He is married and has four children.

Fred, age 40, sustained a traumatic head injury 2 months ago. Prior to the accident, he was living with his mother; his mother has Alzheimer's disease and Fred has been her primary caretaker. Fred is a resident at New Haven Rehabilitation Institute, a residential rehabilitation program.

Elizabeth, age 18, was recently diagnosed as having schizophrenia. She is single, African-American, and has lived in a small rooming house since 1989.

Reason for Referral

The reason for referral needs to be clearly and comprehensively stated. In order to assess the quality of this section, ask yourself the following questions:

How well does it describe the referral rationale from both the client's perspective as well as the concerns of the agency responsible for the referral?

Does it contain both general and specific concerns (if applicable)?

Disability Information

In order to assess the quality of this section ask yourself the following questions:

How well does this section provide information which identifies the disability and concisely but comprehensively describes the impact of the disability?

Are the functional limitations of the disability clearly explained?

Is this done in a manner which is relevant to rehabilitation planning?

Background Information

In order to assess the quality of this section ask yourself the following questions:

How well does this section provide other information (not contained in preceding section) which is relevant to rehabilitation planning?

Does it begin with a clear description of the client's current situation?

Is this information well organized?

Are patterns reflected in either topic sentences and/or a paragraph which concludes this section?

AN EXAMPLE OF 2 SUBSECTIONS OF A FOLLOWS:

Reason for referral

Lynn requested an assessment due to her concern over future career plans. She is presently working as a jewelry craftsperson and is concerned that she will not be able to continue this in the future. In specific, she is finding that her hands are evidencing some signs of arthritis and the physicians believe this is due to the wearing down of the joints in her fingers due to repetitive motions. A secondary concern is her feeling that she has never lived up to her potential and settled for a career which is of very little interest to her.

Background Information

Lynn is currently employed in a retail jewelry store in a position which requires her to make repairs on jewelry and to set precious stones into jewelry mountings. She has worked in this position for seven years. She feels as if she is underemployed but adds "this is the best job I have had."

Lynn's educational history revealed an individual generally performs at superior levels in structured academic settings. She attended Deerfield High School in Deerfield, Illinois and graduated in the top 2% of her class. Strengths were apparent in the area of art. In specific, she completed several courses in oil painting and was generally regarded as the most talented member of the art classes. Her studies apparently came easily to her and she described herself as finding school "boring but easy." It must be noted that she was a National Merit Scholar but did not participate in other extra curricular activities. She described herself as "quiet" during her high school years, reports having a few good friends and very little interest in typical high school activities such as football games, clubs and parties.

Following high school graduation, Lynn attended the University of New Mexico and majored in art. Once again, she reported attaining excellent grades with very little effort. She was not particularly interested in academic success but once again performed at a superior level as evidenced by a Q.P.A. of 3.8 (on a four point scale). Lynn noted that she particularly liked her art and literature classes and "hated" her public speaking courses. With respect to the latter, she noted that she is soft spoken and somewhat introverted and was terrified when she had to make presentations in class. She noted that although other students were nervous, she truly believes her anxiety in this setting was abnormal.

Following graduation in 1982, with a B.S. in Art, she worked for two years in a factory which made eyeglasses. She stated, "I felt just like a dumb machine" but I didn't know what else to do with my education. In response to her parent's suggestion, she enrolled in graduate school and obtained a Master's degree in art metals. Following graduation in 1983, she obtained her current position in the jewelry store.

Lynn's vocational history contrasts markedly with her educational history in the sense that most of her positions did not reflect her abilities. She worked for four years throughout high school as a waitress at Howard Johnson's. When asked if she liked it she replied, "it was a job and I was lucky they didn't fire me". She elaborated by adding that customers did not particularly like her because she didn't like to "play up to them". She left Howard Johnson's when she entered college. She did not work again until

college graduation. when (as noted previously) she obtained employment in the eyeglass factory. She described herself as "performing OK" in this position and was rated as "average" by her supervisor despite the fact that she tended to make occasional careless errors. These seemed to do with lack of attention rather than lack of technical skill.

Lynn is regarded by superiors as performing well in her current position at the jewelry store. She has received two raises in the past seven years and is currently earning about \$18,000 annually. She describes herself as technically very skillful at setting precious stones and executing difficult repairs.

Lynn is divorced and is involved in a ten year long relationship with a man she considers to be a lifelong partner. She is satisfied with her relationship and apparently finds her daily life to be enjoyable. She has numerous interests which include planting flowers, reading, playing the flute and is very involved in local food banks and literacy programs. She still regards herself as "shy" and has trouble being assertive with others.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SECTION B

COPS DIRECTIONS AND EXAMPLE

1. Identify test and describe its purpose.
2. Report the scores.
3. Describe the characteristics of the overall profile.
4. Starting with the highest interest scores, discuss those which are meaningful. Define occupational cluster(s) if relevant to your discussion.
5. You may comment concisely on how the profile of scores fit a current job or expressed interest in specific field. Elaboration on this congruence or lack of congruence is to be provided in the Summary and Recommendations section.

A partial illustration follows:

The Career Occupational Preference System (COPS) was completed in order to clarify Bill's interest. His interest scores were as follows:

Outdoors Occupations 98th percentile

etc.

etc.

etc.

(Include all scores in descending order)

His profile was characterized by few elevated interest scores and a preponderance of scores indicating a strong dislike for many types of occupations. He indicated a high level of occupational interest in only one of the fourteen occupational clusters covered by the COPS. Outdoors occupations. His expressed interest reached the 80th percentile in this career cluster. His present job as an animal attendant at a veterinarian clinic and previous job as a groundskeeper are both included in this occupational cluster. His interest in Professional Service occupations reached the 65th percentile. Professional service occupations include positions of high responsibility in caring for the personal needs and welfare of others in the fields of social service, health and education. Bill expressed an average level of interest in Skilled Science occupations and the Skilled Arts. His career interest profile indicated a dislike for the remaining ten career clusters: Professional Science, Skilled Science, Professional Technology, Skilled Technology, Consumer Economics.

An example of how to construct SECTION C of your report follows:

The Career Orientation placement and Evaluation Survey (COPES) was administered in order to clarify some of Bill's values which may have a bearing on the types of occupational roles he would find most satisfying. The COPES, based on a system of polarities, indicated that he prefers jobs/activities which emphasize the following characteristics:

investigative (95th percentile) vs. accepting tasks
supportive (93rd percentile) vs. leadership roles
carefree (92nd percentile) vs. practical working conditions
independence (70th percentile) vs. conformity
aesthetic (70th percentile) vs. realistic considerations
recognition (65th percentile) vs. privacy

The results indicated that Bill strongly values clearcut activities in which he can see the concrete results of his work rather than activities which require him to solve complex challenging tasks. The results also suggest a marked preference for working in a supportive role in which he may be a good follower and need not be responsible for making decisions, directing others, or speaking for a group. He demonstrated a preference for activities in which he is relatively free from rules and regulations. An appreciation of artistic tasks was evident. Bill's responses indicated a preference for becoming well known or famous and receiving public recognition rather than keeping his activities private. The results did not indicate a significant preference in either direction on the following COPES scales:

social vs. self-concern
orderliness vs. non-compulsive

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SECTION D

The Career Ability Placement Survey (CAPS), a vocational abilities battery, resulted in the following scores:

<u>Ability Area</u>	<u>Stanine</u>	<u>Range</u>
Perceptual speech & accuracy	7	above average
Numerical Ability	6	slightly above average
Language Usage	6	slightly above average
Verbal Reasoning	5	average
Mechanical Reasoning	4	slightly below average
Spatial Relations	4	slightly below average
Word Knowledge	4	slightly below average
Manual Speech & Dexterity	4	slightly below average

Bill's performance on the eight subtests of the CAPS indicated his strongest measured skill is his ability to rapidly and accurately perceive details in tabular material. It is important to note, however, that he viewed this subtest as a challenge and expressed the desire to complete all the test items. Therefore, he demonstrated the most motivation to perform well on this particular subtest. His ability to reason with and use numbers appears to be a relative strength; his score on the numerical ability subtest fell within an above average range. His knowledge of standard English grammar and punctuation is similarly above average when compared to a norm group of persons with a similar level of college education. His performance on a measure of inductive and deductive reasoning fell within a slightly below average range as did his abilities to comprehend mechanical principles and visualize objects in three dimensions. His knowledge of the meaning and precise use of words also fell within a low average range as did his ability to make rapid and accurate hand movements. According to Bill's profile on the CAPS, he demonstrates the requisite abilities to be potentially successful in a wide range of occupational clusters. Those which correspond to his interest will be discussed in the following section.

Instructions for Writing Section E.

Summary and Recommendations:

NOTE: The summary and recommendations section is broken down into sections 1, 2, 3 and 4 merely for the sake of explaining how to construct this section of the report. These letters are not to be used in the final report.

1. The purpose of the first section is to summarize the most relevant background information.

Be thoughtful in the selection of material to include and be concise.

An example follows:

"Sonia, age 45, was referred for this vocational assessment ten months after she was operated upon for a benign tumor in her frontal lobe. She has 3 children and is married. Prior to the diagnosis of her tumor, she had been employed for the past twenty years as a medical social worker. However, the surgery left her with some impaired cognitive and social skills. Consequently, she has been unable to return to her profession."

2. This section summarizes highlights of the test results.

NOTE: All important points should be included but this section should not be a total rehash of what you said in the results section.

An example follows:

"In brief, the results of her interest profile, the COPS, revealed very few measured interests. Her highest score on the COPS (reflecting interest in clerical occupations) reached only the 45th percentile. The lack of any interests rising above the average level may have been a function of the discouragement she expresses regarding future career endeavors. The results of the COPES, an inventory of career related values, indicated a very strong desire for independence from rules and regulations and public recognition for her accomplishments. Her abilities profile, as measured by the CAPS, revealed definite strengths as well as marked deficits. Her scores ranged from superior scores (in the areas of numerical ability and perceptual speed and accuracy) to a low score in verbal reasoning. The remaining scores on the abilities battery clustered in the average range."

3. The next section looks at congruence among the scores on the battery. I tend to look at where interests and abilities correlate and look at the impact of career values in a subsequent section. This variation on the battery is based on my feeling that these are the most important to correlate initially -- I would rather a client starts out with more options so I look for congruence between two rather than three characteristics. I don't ignore values, I look at these individually by occupation rather than by occupational cluster.

An example of how this section begins follows:

"According to her career preferences, as measured by the COPS and her performance on the CAPS, the best meshing of her interests and abilities is found in the following career clusters:

Clerical: This cluster is comprised of occupations which involve recording, posting...etc. Specific occupations subsumed under this category include: (list several but not all-choose most relevant ones)
REPEAT FOR EACH APPROPRIATE CLUSTER

4. The next section is the most challenging one for you to write.

In narrative format, you need to integrate what you have learned about the client from the assessment and relate this information to the referral questions.

For example: I assume all of you would want to look at the question of potential for Rehab. Similarly all of you should look at what your profile (as well as background information) suggests about potentially satisfying areas of specialization. Many of you will want to look at what the assessment results indicate about graduate studies, changing field, etc.

Back up your judgements with "evidence" -- in other words you need to cite the data which supports your conclusions.

This is also the section in which you are to address the impact of values on specific occupational choice.

This section of the report should also include any specific recommendations you feel are important such as the need to acquire more information about a few specific occupations; the need for specific remedial courses, the need for more testing (for a particular reason); the need for counseling on specific issues; etc.