



# FOCUS 2

## Career and Education Planning Workbook

Career Dimensions, Inc.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction to FOCUS 2	3
Setting up Your FOCUS 2 Account	5
Snapshot of the FOCUS 2 Main Menu	6
Article: Introduction to the Career & Education Planning Process	7
Activity #1: Your Career Planning Status	12
Activity #2: Identifying Occupations of Interest	13
Activity #3: Exploring Occupations of Interest	14
Activity #4: Identifying Majors of Interest	16
Activity #5: Creating a Plan to Achieve Your Objectives	17
Help from Counselors: Coping With Obstacles and Concerns	19
Journaling Exercises	20
Conclusion	23

# INTRODUCTION TO FOCUS 2

## What is FOCUS 2?

FOCUS 2 is an online interactive, self guided career and education planning system designed to help you make decisions about your future career goals and education plans.

FOCUS 2 will guide you through an interactive process to:

1. Assess your career planning readiness, work interests, values, skills, personality type and leisure time interests.
2. Discover occupations that match your personal preferences and attributes to broaden your career options.
3. Decide which career fields, majors and training programs are best for you.
4. Plan for career relevant experiences during your college years such as internships, study abroad, work experience, volunteering, and building a network of contacts.
5. Plan the career and educational pathway that will support your personal needs and goals.



## WHEN SHOULD YOU USE FOCUS 2?

Use FOCUS 2 throughout your college years and after you graduate. FOCUS 2 can be used in different ways throughout all stages of your education and career planning according to your needs.

### **Under Classman:**

- Understand the career planning process
- Learn about yourself through self-assessments
- Explore majors at your college that match your interests and support your career goals
- Discover and explore career fields and occupations that appeal to you
- Develop an action plan to engage in career building activities
- Make informed decisions about your major and future career

## Upper Classman and Alumnus:

- Ongoing career exploration and awareness
- Develop an action plan to engage in career building activities and test drive your decisions
- Make career plans
- Plan for advanced education and training
- Make informed decisions about your major and career

## HOW MUCH TIME DOES IT TAKE TO USE FOCUS 2?

Typically, the time spent by students, the first time they use FOCUS 2, ranges from 1 to 2 hours. Of course, you can spend as much time as you need. The Career Planning Readiness & Self Assessments modules of FOCUS 2 can usually be completed in approximately 45 minutes. You can log in at any time to spend additional time exploring 1,000 + occupational choices.



## THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

- Use FOCUS 2 online on any PC or MAC computer or tablet anywhere, anytime.
- FOCUS 2 always saves your results.
- Use the FOCUS 2 tools in any order and as often as you wish.
- You can change your mind about earlier choices, repeat a section and explore new options.
- Your results are stored online and are always available to you and your career counselor/advisor.

# SETTING UP YOUR FOCUS 2 ACCOUNT

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## HOW TO SET UP YOUR ACCOUNT AND LOG INTO FOCUS 2

### **New Users:**

Create your account by linking to your [Winston-Salem State University FOCUS2 self-registration page](#)  
You will need WSSU Career Development Services *access code* to register.

Contact Career Development Services office (336-750-3240 / [careersvcs@wssu.edu](mailto:careersvcs@wssu.edu).) or an Academic Success Counselor ([fordbe@wssu.edu](mailto:fordbe@wssu.edu) or [noelkek@wssu.edu](mailto:noelkek@wssu.edu).) for help acquiring the access code.

### **Returning Users:**

Log back into your FOCUS2 account at any time. The [FOCUS2 login page for Winston-Salem State University can be accessed here.](#)

If you forget your username and/or password, click the link on the FOCUS 2 login page to have this information automatically emailed to you.

The layout of the FOCUS 2 Main Menu mirrors the steps of the career planning process. Most students start at the top of the Main Menu and work down. A snapshot of the FOCUS 2 Main Menu appears on the following page.

# FOCUS2 MAIN FEATURES

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My Career Planning Readiness: is a self-assessment tool that helps you determine where you stand on the path of your career

My Academic Strengths: is a self-assessment tool that helps you determine where your academic strengths and weakness exist Recognizing your academic strengths will bring you one step closer to pursuing a satisfying area of study and career path.

Self-Assessment: is used to help you learn more about how your personality, skills, values and what you enjoy doing in your free time which can lead to your career path. The following are under the Self-Assessment:

1. Work Interest: will identify occupations and tasks you most enjoy
2. Personality: matches your personality type to compatible occupations
3. Skills: identify occupations that match your profile
4. Values: identify occupations that are compatible with your work values
5. Leisure Interest: identify occupations that provide opportunities and activities compatible with your leisure preference
6. Combine: the results from the assessments and give a table of the top careers that best suit student's answers

Explore the Possibilities: is used to help students browse different career and occupations. The following are under "Explore the Possibilities:

1. What can I do with a major offered at WSSU?
2. Explore any Area of Study
3. Explore any Occupation
4. Explore Occupation by Job Family
5. Compare 2 Occupations Side by Side

Take Action: assist you by organizing your educational and professional development activities in preparation for resume creation, graduate school applications, and/or job search activities.

# ARTICLE: INTRODUCTION TO THE CAREER PLANNING PROCESS

## THE CAREER & EDUCATION PLANNING PROCESS

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### WHY CAREER PLANNING IS NECESSARY

In today's world of rapid change, transformation and progress, new career paths are constantly unfolding, traditional ones are being changed and shifts are taking place in occupation skills and educational requirements. These changes are a result of new technology, modifications in organizational design and the trend towards global business operations. With all these changes, you might ask "What is the point of planning ahead by developing a career plan?" It is important to be ready for change with a set of career goals, strategies and options based on your interests, personality, values, and skills. Once you have a plan, you will be equipped to manage your career and take advantage of changes in the economy and job market rather than becoming a victim of change.

### WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR PLANNING AND MANAGING YOUR CAREER?

Planning your career is totally your responsibility. It is up to you to do the planning and take the necessary actions to obtain the education and training that will support your career plans. However, you can get help. For example, your advisor or career counselor can advise you about:

- your career planning strategy
- how to find information you need
- how to get around obstacles
- how to go about planning your current and long-term education and training

Keep in mind, throughout your life, you are the one who must make all the decisions about your career and produce the results that support your goals. It is up to you to control and navigate your own destiny.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF ASSESSMENT

Understanding yourself is a critical aspect of career and educational exploration and planning. The more you know about your career-related interests, values, skills, personality type and preferences, the better equipped you will be to identify the career fields, major areas of study and training programs, and education pathways that are compatible with your personal attributes. The FOCUS 2 system will help you develop an accurate self-assessment of your personal qualities:

- **Your Work Interests** are a reflection of the kinds of work-related activities and tasks you most enjoy doing.
- **Your Personality Type** is a description of how you react to certain situations and people and how you make decisions, organize information, and solve problems.
- **Your Values** are a description of what is most important to you in life. For example, you might value earning a lot of money, helping other people, being creative and artistic, having a secure and steady job, etc.
- **Your Skills** are a reflection of your talents and the activities you easily learn and perform well.
- **Your Leisure Time Interests** are a reflection of the kinds of leisure-related activities you most enjoy doing.



### THE BIG PICTURE: YOUR LIFE PLAN

It is a good idea to plan your career based on the big picture, that is, your life plan. Ask yourself, “What kind of life do I want to lead?” As you can imagine, your career decisions will dramatically impact your lifestyle. Your occupation will influence your

- income
- work hours
- travel
- job security
- colleagues and friends
- leisure time
- where you live



Questions you need to ask yourself about your life plan are:

- What principles am I committed to as a person? i.e. family, security, prestige, accomplishments.
- What kinds of experiences do I want in my life? i.e. travel, adventure, cultural.
- What personal talents do I want to develop? i.e. music, art, language, communication, intellectual.
- How do I like to spend my leisure time? i.e. community services, recreation and sports, travel.

Finally, you must ask yourself whether the occupational goals and educational avenues you are considering will be supportive of your life plan.



## ROLES YOU PLAY IN YOUR LIFE

Being a worker will be interconnected with other roles you play in life. Examples of roles that are affected by your career could include being a parent, a community citizen, a student, a recreationist. Your career reaches beyond being a wage earner in your chosen occupation. For example, consider the following scenario: If you were a wage earner, parent, and student then clearly your income must be sufficient to pay for the expenses incurred in these other roles.



Most people are primarily involved with two or three roles at a time. Which roles you are focusing on depends upon your age and life stage. For example, in college, your principle roles may be as student and recreationist. Later in life your principle roles may be as worker and parent. The point is that throughout your life you will play a combination of work, leisure, study, homemaking, and citizen roles that are intermixed. Therefore, when you make decisions about your career, you should take into consideration the effect of these career decisions on the other areas of your life.

## THE LIFE-CAREER RAINBOW

Refer to the Life-Career Rainbow Chart below to get a better picture of the kind of roles you may play at various ages and stages of your career and life.

The two outer arcs of the Life-Career Rainbow show you the life stages you may move through during your career and life, and your approximate age in each. The lower arcs of the Life-Career Rainbow show you the different roles you may engage in while in different life stages and ages.

## SUMMING IT ALL UP

Here is how to take the 'Big Picture' into consideration when making career and education plans:

First, when choosing an occupation, think about which of your options will most likely provide you with self-fulfillment in all your roles, not only in the present, but in the future.

Second, periodically re-examine your career plans, take stock of yourself and what is happening in your life, and then make adjustments in your career as needed. For example, changes in your career field may require that you learn new skills, or changes in your personal interests, values, social or family situations may affect your career aspirations.

## **BENEFITS OF HAVING A CAREER PLAN**

Once you have established your career goals you will be better able to make choices about your college major and minor areas of study and the courses you should take. Your career goals will also enable you to make decisions about personal developmental activities while in college such as internships, volunteer work and summer jobs. Research has shown that there are many significant advantages and benefits of having career plans. College students with career plans:

- Are less likely to make costly changes in their college education plans and are more likely to graduate on time.
- Are more confident and satisfied with their choice of an occupation and major area of study.
- Achieve higher college grades because their decisions about their educational path are compatible with and based on their personal interests, values, and abilities.
- Earn higher incomes in their entry jobs

While in college, it's a good idea to map out an action plan that leads you to your goals. The plan can serve as a reference that you and your advisers can monitor and adjust as needed.

## **SEEKING EXPERT ADVICE: CAREER COUNSELING**

In conjunction with using FOCUS 2, you may want to meet with a career counselor, mentor, or advisor.

Be prepared to ask questions concerning:

- Your career-related interests, values, personality, and abilities.
- Your present occupational, educational and college/training goals and plans.
- Responsibilities or obstacles that are interfering with your career and college/training decision-making.
- Your life plan, lifestyle desires and strategies to achieve your goals.



Your career advisor can give you ideas and information to help you:

- Verify the rationale of your career decisions and education plans.
- Help you develop your long-term educational path.
- Pinpoint your personal development needs that will help you to achieve your goals.
- Suggest ways to get around any obstacles that are interfering with your decision-making and planning.
- Formulate strategies and action plans to achieve your career and educational objectives.

Career Planning is a lifelong process of exploration and planning of your career and educational goals compatible with your interests, values, talents, personality, and aspirations. Career planning involves thinking about which educational and occupational paths will provide you with satisfaction and fulfillment in all aspects of your life, present and future.

# Activity #1: YOUR CAREER PLANNING STATUS

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In the Your Career Planning Status module of FOCUS 2, you answered questions that measured your level of involvement in activities that support self-awareness, career exploration and your satisfaction with your career planning. Your results are displayed graphically and verbally in your FOCUS 2 account. Log in to your FOCUS 2 account to view your results.

A sample graph is displayed below.

- **Self-Assessment (pink)** It is important that you are actively involved in self-assessment because it is the first and most important step in career planning.
- **Career Exploration (green)** It is important that you are actively involved in career exploration because it will help you to discover and understand career options to make your career plans. Exploration of occupations is a key component of career planning.
- **Career Planning Satisfaction (blue)** Your score in Career Planning Satisfaction reflects how ready you are to engage in career planning activities. Obstacles that could interfere with your ability to plan could be financial, family responsibilities, lack of information, etc.

What action steps will you take to become more engaged in self-assessment and career exploration?

What support services are available to you at this college to assist you with your career planning and to resolve any concerns?

## Activity #2: IDENTIFYING OCCUPATIONS OF INTEREST

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After completing the FOCUS 2 assessments you should explore and identify occupations of interest. The following activity will help you to narrow down your choices.

**Step 1:** Log into your FOCUS 2 account and click on **Narrow and Refine Your Results: See Your Top Career Choices** on the Main Menu. Be sure to select your preferred education level.

**Step 2:** Print the display of the top 25 occupations and majors that match your combined assessment results and examine the occupations.

**Step 3:**

- Circle the occupations that immediately appeal to you
- Put a star next to the occupations that surprise you but sound interesting
- Put a line through those occupations that do not appeal to you.

Explore the details of an occupation that you have either circled or starred by clicking on the occupation in FOCUS. Details for each occupation are found on the occupation menu on the left side of the page.

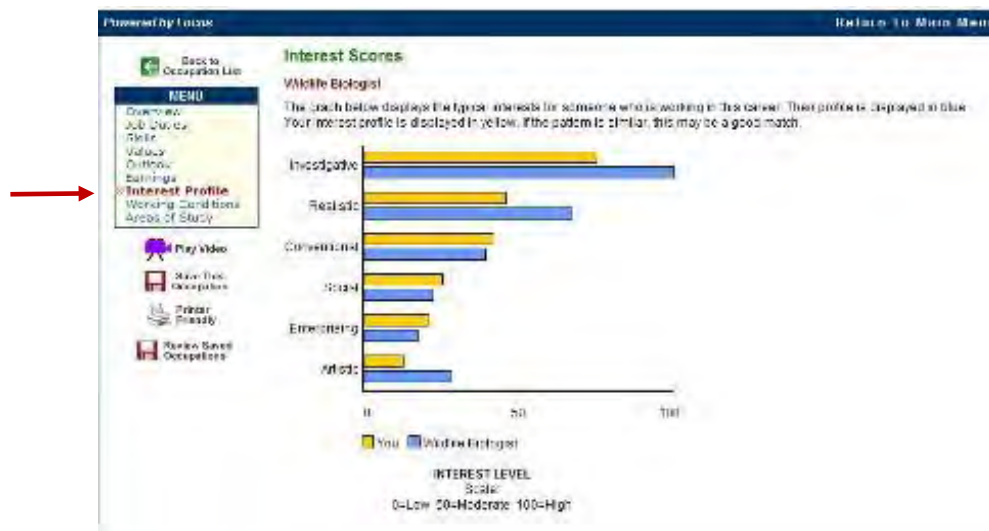
## Activity #3: EXPLORING OCCUPATIONS OF INTEREST

The following activity will help you to examine an occupation of interest to you in detail.

**Step 1:** Log into your FOCUS 2 account and click on **Narrow and Refine Your Results: *See Your Top Career Choices*** on the Main Menu or use the feature called **Search by Name**.

**Step 2:** Select any occupation of interest to you by clicking on the occupation.

**Step 3.** Click on the Interest **Profile** of the occupation to see a graphic comparison of your Holland Code (yellow) with the occupation's Holland Code (blue).



Are your work interests (Holland Code) similar to the work interests (Holland Code) of the occupation?

**Step 4:** Examine the details of the occupation. While exploring the occupation, consider the following questions.

Does the occupation support your work interests, personality preferences, skills and values? Why is the occupation a good fit for you?

Do you do well in classes associated with the supporting major(s) of the occupation?

Do you find the work details of the occupation appealing?

Does the occupation support your career goals?

What questions / comments do you have about the occupation you are examining?

**Step 5:** Reflect on the following questions:

- What would the typical day entail in this occupation?
- What personal attributes based on your self-assessment results do you have that would be an asset to you if you were hired in this occupation?
- What strengths would be needed to succeed in this occupation?
- Does your choice of a college major and planned degree level support this occupation?
- What courses and/or work experiences would be helpful or required to succeed in this occupation?
- What challenges would you face in this occupation?
- Click on **Job Board and Internship Opportunities** on the main menu of FOCUS 2 to explore the job market for this occupation. What did you learn from your search?
- What other occupations might this occupation could lead to?

**Step 6:** Finally, identify and save the occupation if it appeals to you. When saving an occupation in FOCUS 2, complete the comment box and give the occupation a ranking. Your comments and occupation preferences will be saved in your FOCUS 2 portfolio. Save at least 5 occupations that appeal to you.

List the 5 occupations that you find most appealing:

## Activity #4: IDENTIFYING MAJORS OF INTEREST

After completing the FOCUS 2 assessments you may wish to explore the majors that support the occupations that match your assessment results and are of interest you. The following activity will help you to narrow your choices.

**Step 1:** Log into your FOCUS 2 account and click on [Narrow and Refine Your Results: See Your Top Career Choices](#) on the Main Menu.

**Step 2:** Print the displayed occupation and major list that matches your combined assessment results. Examine the majors that support the occupations that are most appealing to you.

- Circle the majors that immediately appeal to you
- Star the majors that surprise you but sound interesting
- Put a line through those occupations that do not appeal to you.

**Step 3:** Return to the Main Menu and click on [What can I do with a major in...?](#) Click on any major that you have circled or starred on your printout. Now examine the major description **and** the occupations associated with the major.

Do you enjoy studying the subject matter of the major?

Do you do well in classes associated with the major?

Do you find the occupations associated with the major appealing?

Does the major support your career goals and favorite occupations?

What questions/comments do you have about the major you are considering?

Is this major a good fit for you?

Save the major if it appeals to you. When you save a major, complete the comment box to explain why the major appeals to you. Your results will be saved in your FOCUS 2 portfolio.

List 2-3 majors that you find appealing:



## Activity #5: CREATING A PLAN TO ACHIEVE YOUR OBJECTIVES

To assure systematic progress toward your goals, it is helpful to have an "Action Plan." Use the tool [Build Your Action Plan](#) on the FOCUS 2 Main Menu to record the education plans and the experiences that you will pursue to support your career development. As you build your action plan, reflect on your long-term goals and the immediate steps you will take to achieve your goals.

Follow these steps to help you work towards a goal:

- Step 1: Define your goal
- Step 2: Take specific action steps
- Step 3: Identify resources that can help you achieve your goal
- Step 4: Set deadlines
- Step 5: Identify any obstacles
- Step 6: Make adaptations as needed

### Suggested Student Action Plan "To Do" List

- Depending on the major(s) you are considering, you may need to complete time-sensitive matters related to courses in your major, further education, certificates, etc. Find out what these deadlines are and include them in your action plan.
- Map out the college courses you will take (and in what sequence) in your preferred major. Be sure to include prerequisite courses. Include dates. List the support services you will utilize at your college to help you make your course plan and address any academic needs.
- Meet with the professors in the department of your preferred major to learn about career and internship opportunities. Ask for their expert advice on how to succeed in your major and preferred career field.
- Read the biographies of the professors in the major fields of study that are of interest to you.
- Talk with students majoring in the field of study you are considering learning about their experiences.
- Find out about opportunities for job shadowing, internships, externships, and informational interviewing in a field of interest to you. Take note of important dates.



- Volunteer or take a part-time job to gain experience in a career field of interest to you.
- Learn about employers in a career field of interest to you.
- Conduct informational interviews with local employers to learn about their work field. What positions exist in their company? What credentials do they seek in candidates being considered for employment?
- Talk with people employed in occupations/career fields that interest you. Find out what they studied in college and what experiences gave them a competitive edge in the work world.
- Attend career fairs, industry panels and company information sessions.
- Is additional training or graduate school a part of your action plan? If so, when and in what type of program? Seek the advice of a professional/graduate school advisor and research programs online.
- Learn how to market yourself. Review your FOCUS 2 Career Portfolio assessment results. What are your strengths? Be able to describe your work interests, personality, skills, and values and why your attributes will be an asset to a potential employer.

# HELP FROM COUNSELORS: SEEKING EXPERT ADVICE AND COPING WITH OBSTACLES/CONCERNS

Following your use of FOCUS 2 it will be beneficial to discuss your results with a career advisor. Occasionally, you may foresee obstacles that could interfere with your career and education plans. You should discuss any concerns you have with a career advisor.



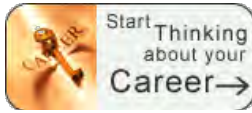
Check off topics that you would like to discuss with your career advisor:

- Deciding on a major
- Deciding on a career field
- Taking the next steps to test drive and implement your career plan
- Making plans for further education/training
- Other (describe below)

Check off the items that apply to you:

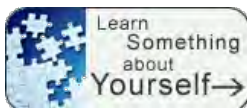
- I need more details about occupations, majors, education requirements, etc.
- My self-assessment work interests scores are low.
- My self-assessment work interests scores are all very similar.
- The lists of occupations that match my self-assessments are too limited.
- I have too many occupations that appeal to me. I need help narrowing down my choices.
- I think the courses in my preferred major might be too difficult for me.
- I need some advice about a personal situation that is affecting my career decision making.
- Other people must approve or support my plans.
- Financial problems.
- Other (describe below)

# JOURNALING



## Career Readiness Journaling Exercises

- Reflect on how your personal background and experiences have influenced your career aspirations and choice of a major.
- Describe a recent accomplishment in your life or one that you might like to achieve in the future.
- What would you consider to be your greatest achievement in your life so far and why?
- Reflect on your past work, volunteer, or internship experiences. What did you learn from these experiences that can help you in your decisions about your future career? What qualities are most important to you in your future work?
- Identify career planning, personal development, and/or academic needs you would like to address based on your FOCUS 2 Your Career Planning Status results.
  - List campus resources, including office locations and phone numbers, that offer assistance in the areas you would like to address.
  - List strategies for improvement or growth in these areas and how you plan to implement them.
- What steps will you take to improve your self-awareness, your involvement in career exploration and your career planning satisfaction?
- What steps will you take to address your personal development needs?
- Reflect on the question, “Why am I enrolled in college?”



## Self-Assessments Journaling Exercises

- Do your self-assessments describe you accurately? Were you surprised by any of the results in your use of FOCUS 2?
- How can you use your personal attributes (interests, personality, values, and skills) to your advantage in your future career?
- Were you surprised by any of the occupations/career paths that match your self-assessments? Do your self-assessment results suggest career options that you had not previously considered?

- Do your work interests match the work interests of your favorite occupation? (view a graphic comparison by clicking on [Interest Profile](#) in the occupation description)
- How will you apply what you have learned from your self-assessments to your choice of a major and your career plans?
- Which majors at this college best relate to your interests, personality, values, and skills?
- Do your self-assessment results support your choice of a major?
- Do your self-assessment results support your current career goals?

#### **Work Interests Journaling Exercises:**

- What did you learn about yourself through the results of your work interest self-assessment? How will these new insights be helpful in your career exploration and choice of a major?
- Describe the work activities that you would most enjoy in an ideal occupation.
- How well do your work interests fit with your current career aspirations?

#### **Personality Journaling Exercises:**

- What did you learn about yourself through the results of your personality self-assessment? How will these new insights be helpful in your career exploration and choice of a major?
- Describe the work environment you would most enjoy in an ideal occupation.
- How well does your personality fit with your current career aspirations?

#### **Skills Journaling Exercises:**

- What did you learn about yourself through the results of your skills self-assessment? How will these insights be helpful in your career exploration and choice of a major?
- How well do your skills fit with your current career aspirations?

#### **Values Journaling Exercises:**

- What did you learn about yourself through the results of your values self-assessment? How will these insights be helpful in your career exploration?
- Examine a favorite occupation. To what extent will your top 3 values be satisfied by this occupation?
- How well do your values fit with your current career aspirations?

#### **Leisure Interests Journaling Exercises:**

- What did you learn about yourself through your leisure interest self-assessment? How will these insights be helpful in your career exploration and choice of a major?
- Describe the work you would most enjoy based on your leisure interests.

## **CAREER EXPLORATION JOURNALING EXERCISES**

- Why is it important to revise your career plans throughout your life?
- What is the value of exploring alternative career possibilities?
- How has what you have learned about yourself through your self-assessments affected your choice of major and career goals?

## **ACTION PLAN JOURNALING EXERCISES**

- Review the courses and certifications associated with your preferred major. What student services and faculty advisory services are available to assist you with your academic needs?
- Identify an important aspect of the career planning process and describe an action you will take to incorporate it into your career planning.

# CONCLUSION

Career and education planning is an ongoing, lifelong process. Continue to use FOCUS 2 as a resource to help you make informed decisions about your career and education.



- Know that it is your personal responsibility to chart your course. No one else can do it for you.
  - Seek the expert advice of career counselors, advisors, instructors, employers to facilitate your progress in the career planning process.
  - Understand your FOCUS 2 results. Review your results summarized in **Review and Print Your FOCUS 2 Career Portfolio** on your own and/or with your career counselor. Review your FOCUS 2 assessment results when writing your résumé, cover letters and planning for interviews. Know why and be able to discuss how your interests, personality type, values and skills will be an asset in the work world.
- 
- Continue your career and education exploration using FOCUS 2. Exploration of occupations is a key component of career planning.
  - Create an Action Plan to achieve your objectives. Plan your course work, map out your objectives and plan for internships, volunteer work, job shadowing and other activities that will support your career and education decision making.
  - Be ready to change your career goals, strategies and options based on your interests, personality, values, skills, and experiences.
  - Be proactive and forward-looking with your planning. Develop new skills and be prepared to make changes. Remember, career planning continues throughout all your life stages.