Muscatine Community College has been actively involved with articulation studies, agreements, and arrangements with several four-year institutions. All of these activities involved personal communications and meetings between faculty and counseling staff at the two and four-year colleges. This process has been successful for us, but we are continually searching for methods of improvement and innovation.


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CAREER ADVISEMENT FOR BIOLOGY MAJORS

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Because of the condition of the economy and the high unemployment rate, many college students and their parents are more career conscious than ever before. This concern is becoming an increasingly important factor in choosing the major for the freshman year of college. Some students have made a premature commitment to an appealing career area and some have drifted into a career choice to please expectations of family and friends. Many students simply do not understand themselves or the world of work well enough to put the two together in a meaningful and realistic career decision. The purpose of this paper is to briefly describe the process of career planning and advising for our biology majors.

Although most students are very concerned about careers, they are not too likely to devote much time to the process of career planning on their own. Therefore, faculty need to provide guidelines, prompting, encouragement and direct assistance so that this activity will take place.

There needs to be a central point where career information can be examined by students. This may be in the campus career office, the library, the biology department or a combination of the above. Such a center should include graduate and professional school information, literature on the various health and science careers, governmental career publications, industrial career publications, publications from various professional organizations, books on career planning in general, listings of job openings in the local area or the job bulletin from a nearby state school.

An early step in the career planning process is for the students to get to know themselves better. There are specific tests, exercises and workshops designed to help students to become more aware of their interests, skills, values, goals, significant accomplishments, etc. Often these activities are handled by the career office on campus. Many of these exercises utilize principles contained in the excellent book, What Color Is Your Parachute?, by John Bolles. Students need to realize what is unique about themselves and to develop and accentuate these strengths. To achieve this result, some students need to be taught that it is important to be their own person and not just continue to blend in with the crowd.

The next step in career planning is for the students to match themselves with a particular career or, better yet, a cluster of related career options. There are two basic sources of career information -- written materials and talking with people in the field. Students need to be encouraged to interview people in their chosen area for career information. Students should have the professional describe a typical day, his likes and dislikes concerning his career, his training, his major responsibilities, and future opportunities for growth in the field. Exposure to the intended field by way of observation periods, part-time work, volunteer work, or internships are extremely valuable. Faculty should see that students get this first hand experience early in their college careers if possible.

Within the department it is often most effective to have faculty specialize in advising the various career directions of the students. This way it is easier to keep current with the career literature, the changing educational requirements, the application procedures, and the local contacts with professionals in that particular field. Special career programs
featuring field trips, guest speakers, discussion of application procedures and career planning in general are also very useful for the students. Utilizing alumni as guest speakers and as off-campus resource people for information on jobs, as well as for internships, is also an important part of career advising.

In conclusion, we faculty need to work toward becoming better career advisers than we are at present. It is important that we help students to know themselves and the career possibilities within biology beginning in the freshman year. The students will find that the options include many different health careers, education, a host of diverse careers (such as research, marketing, sales, technical writing, quality control, public relations and industrial hygiene) in government, the food industry, the pharmaceutical industry, and the chemical industry, as well as sewage treatment, science librarianship, wildlife management, and on and on. With jobs being tighter than before, it is all the more important that our students be prepared for the world of work by actively preparing themselves with the career knowledge and skills they will need.

I hope that you have enjoyed this issue of the MIDWEST BIOSCENE. Without the able assistance of Mrs. Sandra Roth who typed the manuscript and Dr. David Maharry who helped with the printing of the final copy, this issue would still be on my typewriter. The next issue will be published in April, so now is the time to put your creative talents to work. All articles submitted for publication should have the following format:

1. All papers should be double-spaced with all pages numbered.
2. The first page should have the following information: title, authors, author's college address, author's home and college telephone number.
3. Following pages should have the author's names at the top of the paper.
4. Tables, charts and graphs should be numbered and refered to by number in the text; these should be on separate sheets and be fully labeled and "camera-ready".

I encourage you to develop your own innovative ideas for articles to present for publication. My single criterion for selection is "reader interest". The following are some ideas for particular types of articles:

1. MICROCOMPUTERS IN BIOEDUCATION. For this section, I hope that you will submit articles about microcomputer software, hardware and applications. Brief outlines of computer programs that highlight the important aspects of the program are also welcomed. Such outlines should indicate the availability of the program to other faculty.
2. LABORATORIES THAT WORK. Short articles that review the design and structure of a laboratory. These can either be a complete presentation of the laboratory or summaries. With summaries, interested readers should be able to write to the author for a more complete outline.
3. JOB OPENINGS.
4. BIOLOGY AND GOVERNMENT. Articles that summarize activities of state and federal court and legislative bodies that are relevant to biologists, i.e. science education budget, science and religion, research funds, creation - evolution debate.
5. NEWS ABOUT MEMBERS. Advancements in rank, changing jobs, deaths, moves, etc.
6. MINORITIES IN BIOLOGY. What are you and your college doing to increase the representation and retention of minorities in science?
7. DEPARTMENTAL PROFILES. Each issue, beginning in April, I hope to have a profile of a particular department. Since we will be meeting at St. Olaf College next fall, I hope to coerce someone to summarize the curriculum and graduation requirements of their biology department.
8. CULTURE EXCHANGE. Do you have cultures that you will share with your colleagues or do you need particular cultures? If so, simply send a