DEVELOPING YOUR CAREER
SELF-STUDY PLAN

What Do You Want to Be When You "Grow Up?"
More people than you can imagine have trouble deciding what they want to be when they "grow up." Studies indicate that more than 20 percent of all first-year college students have not declared a major. That's all right for the time being, but before long you will need to make a decision, as this choice affects your selection of classes, co-curricular activities, and possible internships. If you delay in selecting a major for too long, you may lose credit hours and take unnecessary courses.

The questions that follow are designed to help you make the decision regarding what you want to do with the rest of your life—your career.

What Is Your Personality Type?
You can best answer this question by taking a personality inventory, such as the Golden Personality Type Profiler. This question is important, because your personality may very well indicate the type of work in which you will be successful and happy. For example, if you are a real people person, you probably will not be very happy in a job with minimal human contact and interaction.

Describe your personality type.

How will your personality type affect your career path?

What Are Your Interests?
Understanding your specific interests may help you decide on a career. If you love working on cars, you might consider becoming a mechanical engineer. If you love to draw or build things, you might be interested in architecture or sculpting.

What are your major interests?

How can these interests be transferred to a career choice?

Do You Enjoy Physical or Mental Work?
Many people would go crazy if they had to spend as much as one hour per day in an office. Others would be unhappy if they had to work in the sun all day or use a great deal of physical strength. The answer to the
following questions will greatly narrow your list of potential career choices. For example, if you are an outdoor person who loves being outside in all kinds of weather, then you should probably avoid careers that are limited to indoor work. You should also consider whether you have any physical limitations that might affect your career choice.

*Do you enjoy physical or mental work or both? Why?*

*What does this mean to your career path?*

Most people, if asked, “Why do you work?” would respond, “For the money.” There is nothing wrong with wanting to make money in your profession, but not all professions, regardless of their worth, pay well. Some of the hardest and most rewarding work pays the least. You have to decide whether to go for the money or do something that is personally challenging and rewarding to you. Many times, you can find both!

*Is your major goal in choosing a profession money or something else? What?*

*What does your goal mean to your career path?*

**Where Do You Want to Live?**
Although this question may sound strange, many careers are limited by geography. If you are interested in oceanography, you would be hard-pressed to find a job living in Iowa; if you love farming, New York City would be an improbably place for you to live. If you like small towns, you might not be happy in Atlanta. Some people simply prefer certain parts of the United States (or the world) to others. You need to ask yourself, “What climate do I really enjoy?” “Where would I be the happiest?” “Do I want to live near my family or away from them?”

*Where do you eventually want to live? Why?*

*What does your preference mean to your career path?*
Do You Want to Travel?
Some jobs require travel: some people love to travel, some hate it. Ask yourself whether you want to be away from your home and family four nights per week, or whether you want a job that does not require any travel.

Do you enjoy travel? Do you want to do a lot of traveling?

What does this mean to your career path?

What Motivates You and What Do You Value?
Do you value relationships, possessions, money? Are you motivated by love, security, challenges, or power? Once you have identified what you value and what motivates you, you can identify careers that closely match your personal value system and eliminate careers that don’t motivate you. If you have to constantly compromise your values just to get a paycheck, you may be unhappy and motivation will be hard to find on a daily basis.

What do you truly value in your life? What motivates you?

How might these two things affect your career decisions?

What Are Your Skills?
Are you especially good at one or two things? Are you good with computers, a good manager of money, a good carpenter, a good communicator? Employers still stress the importance of three basic skills: writing, speaking, and listening. If you have these skills, you are ahead of the pack. If not, you need to enroll in a class that will help you to become better at all three.

What are your skills? What do you do well?

How could your strongest skills help you make a career decision?
Do You Like Routine?

The answer to this question will narrow down your choices tremendously. If you like routine, you will want a career that is conducive to routine and provides structure. If you do not like routine and enjoy doing different things each day, certain careers will be unrealistic for you.

*Do you like routine or do you prefer variety? Why?*

*How does this affect your career path?*

Dream Job

Using the answers you provided to the previous questions and a variety of additional resources, such as websites, job shadowing, and interviews, write a description for your dream job—the job you would have if you could do anything in the world.