



TANG CENTER

BEAR TALK

NEWS AND INFORMATION FROM UNIVERSITY HEALTH SERVICES

Ask the Expert



I don't know if I've chosen the right major. Any advice?

Tang Center psychologist Chris McLean answers questions about career planning.

Should I choose my major based on interest or what I think is most practical?

I think it's very important to be intrinsically interested in your major field of study, in part, because this has implications for motivation and fully developing your skills as a student.

While there are some majors (e.g., engineering and accounting) in content areas directly related to careers, studies consistently show that the majority of students find work in fields

that are not specifically related to their major.

It is the transferable abilities you develop in your major, such as organizational, writing, and problem-solving skills that are most compelling to prospective employers and critical to career success.

In fact, a recent survey of hiring practices found interpersonal skills and the ability to participate as part of a team

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Set up you own personal medicine cabinet

Male Health & Sex Peer Educators are open for business

Depression Screening Day coming up

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Flu shots: Mark your calendar

Can't resist those credit card offers?

Just make sure you go into it with your eyes open

In a recent "Dear Abby" column, a college graduate lamented that she had run up a huge debt on her credit card during her four years at school, and wished she had been more savvy about credit card use when she acquired the card as a freshman. Abby replied with an "It's true" and a "Watch out."

Credit card companies want your business and are out in full force at the beginning of the school year. They offer giveaways such as "free" t-shirts,

sunglasses, and toys if you sign up on the spot. Having a credit card can buy you peace of mind, or get you into financial trouble.

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How to have the best medicine cabinet in the dorm

It can be a shoebox or plastic container, but here's what it has to have in it

You know how in the movies (or is that in real life) the guest always looks in the host's medicine cabinet? If someone looked in yours, what would they see? Or is there anything even resembling a medicine cabinet in your living space?

Consider the following scenario. It's 9 p.m. and you stop studying because your head is aching and you feel hot.

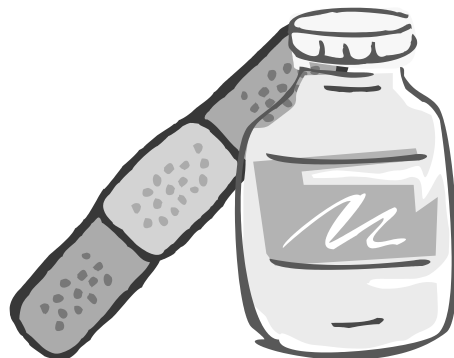
You think you might have a fever, but you're not sure because you don't have a thermometer. Some Tylenol might help but you don't have any on hand.

If your roommates were home, you would ask one of them to make a run to the store, but they're cramming for exams at the library, and who knows when they'll get home. Maybe you could call a friend for help.

Wouldn't it be great right now to have a few things on hand so you could take care of yourself?

During their college or graduate school careers, all students experience occasional minor ailments or injuries.

And every student room, apartment unit or house should have a well



stocked "medicine cabinet" (a shoebox or a plastic container works fine) that includes the following:

- **For allergies:** antihistamine (e.g. Benadryl, Claritin, Allegra).
- **For blisters, minor cuts and scrapes:** band aids, antibiotic ointment or cream (e.g. Bacitracin, Polymyxin).
- **For itchy rashes, insect bites:** hydrocortisone cream (1/2 to 1%) or calamine lotion.
- **For pain and fever relief:** acetaminophen (e.g. Tylenol); aspirin (e.g. Bayer or drug store brands); ibuprofen (e.g. Advil, Motrin).
- **For skin health:** sunscreen, one with an SPF of 15 or more, and preferably one that offers UVA and UVB protection.

■ **A thermometer.** If you call a Tang Center advice nurse, one of the first questions s/he will ask is, "Do you have a temperature?" That's a question you should be able to answer!

■ **For upset stomach:** an antacid (e.g. Tums, Mylanta)

Before taking any over-the-counter medicines, always read the label and note the dosage information and warnings. Also, check the expiration date. Even though you might be on a budget, don't be tempted to save a few dollars by using expired medication. Some become toxic, while others lose or increase their potency.

Get to know your Health Worker

Virtually every group student living center has a trained student Health Worker who is an invaluable resource person. The Health Worker can help you figure out where to go for help at Tang, give you first aid tips (including letting you use a thermometer), answer questions about student health insurance, and much more.

Credit Cards

(from front page)

So, what are some advantages of a credit card?

You can:

- Use it for emergencies (e.g., a family member becomes ill and you need to fly home ASAP).
- Carry around a small amount of cash (credit cards can be replaced if stolen or lost).
- Learn money management skills.
- Establish a positive credit history which will make it easier to get future loans for school, a car, etc.

What's the downside to credit cards?

Consider the following:

You've just gotten your first credit card with a 17% annual interest rate. Before you know it, you've used your credit card to buy a new MP3 player, a digital camera, and some cool clothes. You've even charged a few dinners out.

Your credit card balance is now \$1,000. You can only afford to pay the credit card company \$20 a month. At this rate, it will take you 7 years to pay off the original \$1,000 (that's about \$700 in interest!). And if you keep charging and adding to your balance, think what your situa-

tion could be by the time you graduate.

Resist the high pressure tactics of credit card companies. If you decide to get a credit card, take your time and shop around:

- Look for one with low or no annual fee.
- Check the interest rate, and watch out for low introductory rates that go up later.

Dealing with credit card debt can be very stressful. For your emotional health and financial well-being, don't fall into the plastic/credit trap: only charge what you can afford, and pay off your entire balance each month.

Male health & sex peer educators open for business

Peer educators at University Health Services are trained students who teach and counsel other students.

For years, students have been consulting Health and Sex peer educators on all sorts of topics, from contraception and pre-pelvic exam consultations, to safer sex and how to make it fun. Mainly these were female students (or couples) seeking the help of female peer educators.

But did you know that there are male health and sex peer educators who specifically work with male students? In fact, the male peer educators see only male students, and are trained specifically in a number of issues that male students might face.

Some of the topics a male student might want to discuss could include:

- Sexually transmitted diseases: What are they, how are they treated, and how can you protect against them?
 - HIV/AIDS education, counseling and testing resources.
 - How to make safer sex more erotic.
 - How to perform a self-exam for testicular cancer.
 - Gay, bisexual or transgender (or questioning) sexual health issues.
- Students often are referred to the Health and Sex peer educators by Tang clinicians, but you also can call for an appointment at 642-2000.

Depression Screening Nov. 18

This year's Depression Screening Day on campus is scheduled for Tuesday, Nov. 18, from 11am-2 pm in the MLK Student Union.

This important event offers members of the campus (and community) a free, confidential screening for depression by a counseling professional, as well as information about signs, symptoms and treatment. No enrollment or fee is required.

Signs of depression include persistent feelings of hopelessness, difficulty concentrating, constant fatigue, unexplained aches and pains, or thought of death or suicide.

Students also can seek help at Counseling & Psychological Services on the third floor of Tang.

Ask the Expert

(from front page)

to be the top qualities employers sought in candidates (from the National Association of Colleges and Employers).

Do career tests really help career planning?

While no career inventory can tell you what you should do, career interest and personality tests are often quite helpful in highlighting themes and work style characteristics that may be satisfying in a career.

A well-constructed instrument like the Strong Interest Inventory, for example, is useful because it organizes information about interests and maps it onto the world of work. The Strong is not a prescriptive tool to direct you to a single best career option, but it does allow you to see interest patterns and how similar and dissimilar your interests are to those of people who enjoy working in a variety of careers. This kind of information can be validating, as well as motivating, as it often reaffirms one's core inter-

est preferences and expands the list of career fields to explore based on interest patterns.

What is the best way to prepare for a career?

It is always important to get practical experience and good information about careers. For students and non-students alike, there seems to be pressure to know just what to do before you gain real world experience related to a career.

Internships, part-time jobs, volunteering, and extracurricular activities are critical because you learn so much about what you like and do not like from these experiences. This role experimentation is developmentally appropriate and crucial to identity development within a career context.

If gaining first hand work-related experience is not feasible, informational interviewing and researching detailed information about career fields are the next best thing. For example, there are resources in the UHS Career Counseling Library that provide excellent first-hand accounts about what people do on a daily basis in several different careers.

It is also essential, especially in today's economy, to maintain a realistic outlook on the career planning process.

Career planning is a lifelong process that requires perseverance and the ability to deal with disappointment and some rejection. It is important to not personalize setbacks in a manner that discourages further development of work skills and career exploration.

This is where setting specific career planning goals, developing skills through practical experience, and getting support from friends and colleagues can be particularly useful to moving forward with career plans.

Career testing and counseling is available to all student as part of the Tang Center's Career Counseling Program. See the web site for more information, or make an appointment in Counseling & Psychological Services, third floor of Tang.

Winter's coming...Be Ready



Get a Flu Shot!

To protect yourself, you need a flu shot every year. Drop in to get one at the Tang Center on the dates below. Cost: \$20 (For students with SHIP, cost is \$4.)

- ◆ **Thursday, Oct. 16**
- ◆ **Thursday, Oct. 23**
- ◆ **Wednesday, Oct 29**
- ◆ **Friday, Nov. 7**
- ◆ **Tuesday, Nov. 18**
- ◆ **Wednesday, Dec. 3**

Noon-6 pm, all dates

While
supplies
last

Fall 2003

Open to the Campus & Community • No appointment necessary

University Health Services • Tang Center • First floor/Class of '42 Rm
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