HOEC 98, Fall 2006
“Introduction to the Nutrition Assistant Program”

Job Exploration Project

ASSIGNMENT (60 points total):
• Working together with a partner, conduct a 45-60 minute informational interview of a nutrition professional at his/her work site. At the end of the session, have the “interviewee” sign the “Verification Form”.
• If time and schedules permit, make arrangements to do a field observation of the program or services in action, such as a nutrition education class session, tour of facility, or possibly observe one of their Nutrition Assistant staff in action.

PART I: Written Report (due Tuesday, September 12th, 50 points)
Each student will write his/her own 2-3 page narrative of the informational interview. Include a brief description of the organization, summary of the interview, and a summary reflection paragraph (analyze and evaluate your experience and what you learned—i.e. What did you learn from this interview (both positive and negative impressions)? How does what you learned fit with your own interests, abilities, and goals? Please turn in the completed “Verification Form” with your report.

PART II: Oral Mini-Presentation: (due Tuesday, September 12th, 10 points)
Be prepared to participate in a small group discussion by giving a 15 minute oral summary of your informational interview.

Informational Interviewing

One of the best sources for gathering information about what’s happening in an occupation or an industry is to talk to people working in the field. This process is called informational interviewing. An informational interview is an interview that you initiate - you ask the questions. The purpose is to obtain information, not to get a job. Informational interviewing can be one of your most valued strategies in gathering information and establishing contacts as you build plans for the future.

Reasons to Conduct an Informational Interview:
• to explore careers and clarify your career goal
• to discover employment opportunities that are not advertised
• to expand your professional network
• to build confidence for your job interviews
• to access the most up-to-date career information
• to identify your professional strengths and weaknesses
Steps to Conduct an Informational Interview:

1. **Identify the Occupation or Industry You Wish to Learn About**
   Assess your own interests, abilities, values, and skills, and evaluate labor conditions and trends to identify the best fields to research.

2. **Prepare for the Interview**
   Read all you can about the field prior to the interview; find out background information about the place of employment. Decide what information you would like to obtain about the occupation/industry. Prepare a list of questions that you would like to have answered.

3. **Identify People to Interview**
   Start with lists of people you already know - friends, relatives, fellow students, present or former co-workers, supervisors, neighbors, etc. Professional organizations, the yellow pages, organizational directories, and public speakers are also good resources. You may also call an organization and ask for the name of the person by job title.

4. **Arrange the Interview**
   Contact the person by e-mail or telephone, or by a letter followed by a phone call to set up an interview appointment. Be sure to give a choice of a couple of dates and times, and reconfirm the appointment a day or so ahead if you have made the appointment far in advance.

5. **Conduct the Interview**
   Dress appropriately, arrive 10-15 minutes before your appointment, be polite and professional. Refer to your list of prepared questions; stay on track, but allow for spontaneous discussion. Adhere to the original time request.

6. **Follow Up**
   Be sure to send a thank-you note to your contact within a few days after the interview.
Professional Contacts

Cheryl Magid, RD. Coordinator, Community Service Projects
Congregation Emanu-el
Two Lake Street
San Francisco, CA 94118
Voicemail only (415) 751-2541 ext. 161
cmagid@emanuelsf.org

Venus Savea, Health & Nutrition Specialist
Children's Council of San Francisco
445 Church St.
San Francisco, CA  94114
(415) 276-2903; (415) 305-2354 (work cell)
vsavea@childrenscouncil.org

Fran Ledford, MPH, RD, Instructor
City College of San Francisco, JAD
Consumer Education Department
1860 Hayes St.
San Francisco, CA  94117
fcledford@yahoo.com

May Fong, MPH, RD, Chair
City College of San Francisco, JAD
Consumer Education Department
1860 Hayes St.
San Francisco, CA  94117
(415) 561-1914
mfong@ccsf.edu

Zetta Wells, “5 A Day Power Play!” Coordinator
U.C. Cooperative Extension, Alameda
1131 Harbor Bay Parkway #131
Alameda, CA  94502
(510) 639-1272

Frances Chan, RD
On Lok 30th St. Senior Center
225 30th St.
San Francisco, CA  94131
(415) 550-2218
frances@onlok.org

Kim P. Nguyen, MS
Research Nutritionist
University of California, Berkeley
209 Morgan Hall
Berkeley, CA  94720
(510) 642-5382
kimphuc@nature.berkeley.edu

May Woo, RD
Program Representative
U.C. Cooperative Extension
300 Piedmont Ave., Bldg B, Room 227
San Bruno, CA  94066
(650) 871-7559 (message)
maywoo@ucdavis.edu

Jan McCulloch, Nutrition Education Program Representative
U.C. Cooperative Extension
300 Piedmont Ave., Bldg B, Room 227
San Bruno, CA  94066
(650) 871-7559 (message)
jmcculloch@ucdavis.edu

Dana Andrews, Nutrition Education Program Representative
U.C. Cooperative Extension
300 Piedmont Ave., Bldg B, Room 227
San Bruno, CA  94066
(650) 871-7559
dcandrews@ucdavis.edu

Greta Macaire, R.D.
Community Health Resource Center
2100 Webster St., Suite 100
San Francisco, CA 94115
(415) 923-3857
MacairG@sutterhealth.org

Aimee Yan, MA, RD
City College of San Francisco, JAD
1860 Hayes St.
San Francisco, CA  94117
(415) 561-1914 (message)
aimee_yan@yahoo.com
Karaliese Brown, MEd, RD  
Youth Programs Director  
American Cancer Society  
Greater Bay/Redwood Empire Region  
1700 Webster St.  
Oakland, CA  94612  
(510) 452-5229 x311  
karaliese.brown@cancer.org

Sylvia Lau, MPH, RD, CDE  
Chinatown Public Health Center  
Nutrition Services  
1490 Mason St.  
San Francisco, CA 94133  
(415) 364-7903  
Sylvia.Lau@sfdph.org

Lydia Guzman, MPH, RD  
San Mateo County Health Services  
32 W. 25th Ave., Room 203A  
San Mateo, CA  94403  
lguzman@co.sanmateo.ca.us

Annette Laverty, MS, RD  
Alameda County Nutrition Services  
3600 Telegraph Ave.  
Oakland, CA  94609  
Annette.Laverty@acgov.org

Leah Rinkus, MPH  
San Francisco Food Systems  
c/o San Francisco Department of Public Health, OEHS  
1390 Market St., Suite 822  
San Francisco, CA  94102  
(415) 252-3932  
Leah.Rinkus@sfdph.org

Eric Hernandez, RD, CHDP & WIC  
Program Nutritionist  
San Francisco Department of Public Health  
30 Van Ness Ave. Suite 210  
San Francisco, CA 94102  
Ph: (415) 575-5731  
Eric.Hernandez@sfdph.org

NOTE: available Friday, 8/25 at WIC clinic 10 or 3:30, more flexible at 30 Van Ness

Audrey Oliver, R.D., Chief Dietitian  
and Nancy Campos (NA grad)  
Laguna Honda Hospital  
375 Laguna Honda Blvd.  
San Francisco, CA  94116  
(415) 759-3020  
Audrey.Oliver@sfdph.org

NOTE: Nancy is off on T & W—will give tour of facility

Helen Yuen, Director of Nutrition and Senior Centers  
and April Chan, Nutritionist  
Self-Help for the Elderly  
407 Sansome Street  
San Francisco, CA  94111  
Phone: (415) 677-7601  
Fax: (415) 296-0313  
Email: heleny@selfhelpelderly.org  
Web: www.selfhelpelderly.org
Stella Wu Chu, MA, RD, Nutritionist  
Office on the Aging  
S.F. Depart. of Aging and Adult Services  
875 Stevenson, 3rd Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
(415) 355-6790  
stella.chu@sfgov.org

Kim Madsen, MEd, RD  
Project Open Hand  
730 Polk St.  
San Francisco, CA 94109  
(415) 447-2483  
kmandsen@openhand.org

Nutritionist  
San Francisco Head Start  
205 13th St., Suite 3280  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
(415) 405-0505

Gladys Diamonon, RD & Gloria Fishburn, RD  
Meals on Wheels  
1375 Fairfax  
San Francisco, CA 94124  
(415) 920-1111  
gdiamonon@mowsf.org

Martha Adriasola, Nutrition Project Coordinator  
SFUSD School Health Programs  
Nutrition Education Project  
1515 Quintara  
San Francisco, CA 94116  
(415) 242-2615  
madrias@muse.sfusd.edu
Students:
Please turn in this completed "Verification Form" with your written report.

Job Exploration Project

Professional Contact’s Name: ________________________________________
Job Title: __________________________________________________________
Organization/Agency: ______________________________________________

I verify that _____________________________________________(students’ names)
conducted an information interview of me at my work site on _______________ (date).

Professional Contact’s Signature: ______________________________________
Phone Number: _______________________________________________________
E-mail Address: _______________________________________________________

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Nutrition Assistant Program
HOEC 98: "Introduction to the Nutrition Assistant Program"

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