

The Climate of College: Planning for Your Future

Overview

Description

This activity challenges students to think about life after high school: Where do they hope to be? What do they want to be doing? More importantly, what is it going to take to get there, and what will the environment be like once they arrive?

Final Product: Students will write a researched and revised position paper (3-5 pages) focused on goal setting, the keys to success in a student's field of interest, and the climate of the college or university they hope to attend.

Subject

Cross-Disciplinary

Task Level

Grades 11-12

Objectives

Students will:

- Participate in a dialogue about career choices, college majors, and other future-focused options.
- Engage in a discussion about short-term, intermediate, and long-term goals.
- Discuss effective research practices by consulting online sources, a career center, and/or the library.
- Understand how to create and validate goal-setting behaviors.
- Evaluate sources for quality of content, validity, credibility, and relevance.
- Analyze the culture, climate, and socioeconomic influences of a particular college.
- Appropriately cite sources used.
- Organize information in an effective essay response and include visual representations of data (charts, graphs, etc.).
- Recognize the importance of revision as the key to effective writing.
- Submit a final draft that is easy to read, engaging, and has no grammatical or spelling errors.

Preparation

- Read the Instructor Task Information and the Student Notes.
- Prepare student copies of the Student Notes pages, the *Overall Assignment* handout, the *Making Goals Reality Check* handout, the *SMART Goal-Setting* handout, and the *Credibility of Websites Rubric* handout.
- Find suitable sample research reports or provide samples of previous students' work as models.
- Familiarize yourself with the following videos and article:
 - Inspirational - How Great I Am
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V6xLYt265ZM&feature=related>
 - Setting Goals is Vital to Achieving Results
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wghJ6bxxmLI>
 - Create Your Ideal Life With Goal Setting
<http://www.lululemon.com/education/goalsetting>
 - Goal-Setting Guide article
<http://www.goal-setting-guide.com/goal-setting-tutorials/smart-goal-setting>
- Schedule time for the students to have computer access for research.

Prior Knowledge

Students should have had practice in persuasive writing techniques, expository writing about a particular topic of their choosing, and writing a personal narrative. Students should also have some experience conducting basic forms of research.

Key Concepts and Terms

- Audience
- Climate
- Culture
- Ethnicity
- Intellectual identity
- Intermediate goals
- Long-term goals
- Multicultural societies
- Race
- Rhetorical Purpose
- Short-term goals
- Socioeconomic considerations
- Writing stages

Time Frame

This assignment will require about seven or eight 50-minute class periods. The first two class periods will introduce the assignment, the concepts behind goal setting, the basics of identifying future career options and/or college majors, and understanding the culture and climate of certain college environments. Students will view and

discuss the videos: “Inspirational - How Great I Am,” “Setting Goals is Vital to Achieving Results,” and “Create Your Ideal Life With Goal Setting.” On Day 3, students will review and discuss the online article, “Goal-Setting Guide” and will meet with a partner to discuss their future plans. They will complete Part I of the *Overall Assignment* handout as homework. On Day 4, students will conduct the research component concerning their chosen fields or majors and the climate of their school of interest, using the *Credibility of Websites Rubric* as a guide. They will complete Part II of the *Overall Assignment* for homework. On Day 5, they will transition to goal-setting activities by completing the *Making Goals Reality Check* handout and the *SMART Goal-Setting Chart*. They will complete Part III of the *Overall Assignment* for homework. This phase may require a second day in the computer lab to find any additional information on the Internet. The next day, students should answer the questions in Part IV of the *Overall Assignment* handout, and use these answers to guide the construction of their position papers. You may allow an additional class period if you want to show samples of research papers or previous student work. The following period, students will meet with a peer or small group to discuss their writing and work on any necessary revisions and finalize their essays for homework. This assignment can be modified to meet the needs of different classroom schedules and student ability levels.

Instructional Plan

Getting Started

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- Participate in a dialogue about career choices, college majors, and other future-focused options.
- Engage in a discussion about short-term, intermediate, and long-term goals.

Procedure

1. Ask students to read through the Student Notes.
2. As a class, discuss the concepts behind setting goals, planning for the future, identifying future career options and/or college majors, and understanding the culture and climate of certain college environments.
3. As a group, watch the video: “Inspirational - How Great I Am” (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V6xLYt265ZM&feature=related>).
4. Ask the students to interpret this video. What does it mean? How does it relate to goal setting?
5. Have the students watch the next video, “Setting Goals is Vital to Achieving Results” (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wghJ6bxxmLI>). Follow up this video with a discussion of what it means and how they can learn from it.
6. Watch the final video: “Create Your Ideal Life With Goal Setting” (<http://www.lululemon.com/education/goalsetting>). You can use the worksheets that accompany this video if they seem beneficial, but that is not required. Focus on the video’s content (rather than the marketing angle), and ask students to consider what the video means and how it applies to their life. What will they do next?
7. Finish the exploration phase with the online article: “Goal-Setting Guide.”
8. Have students work with a partner to discuss their future hopes and career aspirations. Ask them if they have considered what will be involved for them to successfully reach that goal. Bring the groups together, and discuss this as a class.
9. As a group, ask students to identify factors that might affect their future environment or the people living there, such as: geographical landmarks, culture, intellectual identity, socioeconomic influences, multiculturalism, ethnicity, inclusionary/exclusionary factors, etc.
10. Ask students to complete Part I of the *Overall Assignment* handout.

Investigating

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- Discuss effective research practices by consulting online sources, a career center, and/or the library.
- Understand how to create and validate goal-setting behaviors.
- Evaluate sources for quality of content, validity, credibility, and relevance.
- Analyze the culture, climate, and socioeconomic influences of a particular college.
- Appropriately cite sources used.

Procedure

1. Have students begin the research component. Ask them to look for practical information about their chosen field or major and the college(s) they hope to attend. During their time on the Internet, instruct students to keep notes about important findings and print out information that may be helpful to them. Encourage them to make an organizational system to keep track of this information. Students should consult the *Credibility of Websites Rubric* to help them determine which websites to select for their research.
2. Following the first day of research, require students to show the information they have found and discuss their conclusions. Students should be able to articulate their field's basic expectations, skill qualifications, and required experience.
3. Instruct students to complete Part II of the *Overall Assignment* handout.
4. To help students transition from research to goal setting, ask them to complete the *Making Goals Reality Check* handout and evaluate their results.
5. Review the *SMART Goal-Setting Chart* as a class and process the results.
6. Ask students to complete Part III of the *Overall Assignment* handout.

Drawing Conclusions

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- Organize information in an effective essay response and include visual representations of data (charts, graphs, etc.). Recognize the importance of revision as the key to effective writing.
- Submit a final draft that is easy to read, engaging, and has no grammatical or spelling errors.

Procedure

1. Instruct students to answer the questions in Part IV of the *Overall Assignment* handout. They should use their answers to guide the construction of a 3-5 page position paper. Instruct them to begin drafting their essays and start deciding which pieces of information will be represented visually through charts, graphs, etc.). Show models of sample research papers or previous student work if appropriate.
2. Set up the room so that following each draft of the essay, students can share in pairs or small groups and receive advice on the content of the essay and the use of language to convey a positive self-image to the audience.
3. Be prepared to offer advice on areas needing attention following each round of peer review.
4. After students have written and revised their drafts, assign the completion of a final essay.

Scaffolding/Instructional Support

The goal of scaffolding is to provide support to encourage student success, independence, and self-management. Instructors can use these suggestions, in part or all together, to meet diverse student needs. The more skilled the student, however, the less scaffolding he or she will need. Some examples of scaffolding that could apply to this assignment include:

- Provide students with an opportunity to present their results orally.
- Give students who have difficulty working with technology the opportunity to work with a partner.
- Provide suggested websites for the topics.
- Find articles or other readings that get students in the mind frame to set goals or think about their future.
- Model the analysis of a website by using the rubric.
- Match students with a partner who has similar future plans to help in the brainstorming and research process.
- Individually discuss critical source evaluation, if necessary.
- Consider utilizing online citation makers, like EasyBib, <http://www.easybib.com> (with instructor guidance), if students are unfamiliar with creating citations.
- Check a student's assignment more frequently during its development.

Solutions

The information below is intended to help you assess students' final work products. It may not represent all possible strategies and ideas. The accompanying scoring guide provides specific examples of ways a student might demonstrate content understanding and mastery of cross-disciplinary skills.

Necessary Elements

- Evidence of use of the *Credibility of Websites Rubric* handout.
- Sufficient information gathering that includes credible sources and shows evidence of appropriate goal development.
- Logical organization of the essay.
- Effective and correct use of language.
- A complete response to the question posed in the essay prompt.
- Conclusions based on evidence.
- Correctly formatted citations of all sources used in the essay.

Key Connections

Conclusions about sources based on:

- Credibility of authorship.
- Content supported by facts, statistics, examples, research, etc.
- Information confirmed using other sources.
- Purpose of website (i.e., not largely consumer-driven).

Conclusions about relevant information based on:

- Adequate goal-planning considerations.
- Sufficient identification of the future demands associated with the student's chosen career path.
- Thorough analysis of a college or university's environment, culture, and setting.

Common Misconceptions

- Students may think that they know all they need to know about their future career choice or major, but encourage them to push deeper with their research. Challenge them to find new information to supplement, or even challenge, their prior knowledge.
- Students might also feel they are fully aware of the culture of their college or university of interest, but they should look past the feelings of friends, family, or even previous experiences, and research what it means to be a student at that school. Encourage them to look for new and interesting sources for information.
- Students might assume that a site is credible because it is easy to navigate, has high-quality images, etc. Conversely, they might dismiss a site because of navigation

difficulties or a lack of images. Remind them to use the *Credibility of Websites Rubric* handout to evaluate each site for content, accuracy, and possible bias and to look beyond presentation to substance.

- Students might limit their searches to the first few results on the search engine, taking popular sites as “the best.” Remind them to use a variety of relevant search terms and scroll through results in order to find credible sources.
- Students might assume “.org” sites are always credible, but remind them to examine all sites for biases.

TCCRS Cross-Disciplinary Standards Addressed

Performance Expectation	Getting Started	Investigating	Drawing Conclusions
<i>I. Key Cognitive Skills</i>			
A.1. Engage in scholarly inquiry and dialogue.	✓	✓	
D.1. Self-monitor learning needs and seek assistance when needed.	✓	✓	✓
D.2. Use study habits necessary to manage academic pursuits and requirements.	✓	✓	✓
D.3. Strive for accuracy and precision.	✓	✓	✓
D.4. Persevere to complete and master tasks.	✓	✓	✓
E.1. Work independently.			✓
E.2. Work collaboratively.	✓	✓	
F.2. Evaluate sources for quality of content, validity, credibility, and relevance.		✓	
F.4. Understand and adhere to ethical codes of conduct.		✓	✓
<i>II. Foundational Skills</i>			
A.5. Analyze textual information critically.		✓	
B.1. Write clearly and coherently using standard writing conventions.			✓
B.3. Compose and revise drafts.			✓
C.4. Evaluate the validity and reliability of sources.		✓	
C.5. Synthesize and organize information effectively.		✓	✓
C.6. Design and present an effective product.			✓
E.1. Use technology to gather information.		✓	
E.3. Use technology to communicate and display findings in a clear and coherent manner.			✓
E.4. Use technology appropriately.		✓	✓

TCCRS Social Studies Standards Addressed

Performance Expectation	Getting Started	Investigating	Drawing Conclusions
<i>I. Interrelated Disciplines and Skills</i>			
A.2. Analyze the interaction between human communities and the environment.	✓	✓	✓
E.2. Define the concept of socialization and analyze the role socialization plays in human development and behavior.	✓	✓	✓
<i>II. Diverse Human Perspectives and Experiences</i>			
A.2. Evaluate the experiences and contributions of diverse groups to multicultural societies.	✓	✓	✓
B.4. Evaluate how major philosophical and intellectual concepts influence human behavior or identity.	✓	✓	✓
B.6. Analyze how individual and group identities are established and change over time.	✓	✓	✓
<i>III. Interdependence of Global Communities</i>			
A.3. Analyze how and why diverse communities interact and become dependent on each other.	✓	✓	✓
<i>IV. Analysis, Synthesis, and Evaluation of Information</i>			
A.1. Identify and analyze the main idea(s) and point(s)-of-view in sources.	✓	✓	✓
A.2. Situate an informational source in its appropriate contexts.	✓	✓	✓
A.3. Evaluate sources from multiple perspectives.		✓	✓
A.4. Understand the differences between a primary and secondary source and use each appropriately to conduct research and construct arguments.		✓	✓
A.6. Read research data critically.		✓	✓
B.1. Use established research methodologies.		✓	✓
B.3. Gather, organize, and display the results of data and research.		✓	✓
B.4. Identify and collect sources.		✓	✓
<i>V. Effective Communication</i>			

A.2. Use conventions of standard written English.			✓
B.1. Attribute ideas and information to source materials and authors.			✓

TEKS Standards Addressed

<i>The Climate of College: Planning for Your Future - Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS): Social Studies, World Geography</i>			
113.43.c.2. History. The student understands how people, places, and environments have changed over time and the effects of these changes. The student is expected to: 113.43.c.2.A. describe the human and physical characteristics of the same regions at different periods of time to evaluate relationships between past events and current conditions.			
113.43.c.5. Geography. The student understands how political, economic, and social processes shape cultural patterns and characteristics in various places and regions. The student is expected to: 113.43.c.5.A. analyze how the character of a place is related to its political, economic, social, and cultural elements.			
113.43.c.8. Geography. The student understands how people, places, and environments are connected and interdependent. The student is expected to: 113.43.c.8.A. compare ways that humans depend on, adapt to, and modify the physical environment, including the influences of culture and technology.			
113.43.c.9. Geography. The student understands the concept of region as an area of Earth's surface with related geographic characteristics. The student is expected to: 113.43.c.9.A. identify physical and/or human factors such as climate, vegetation, language, trade networks, political units, river systems, and religion that constitute a region; and 113.43.c.9.B. describe different types of regions, including formal, functional, and perceptual regions.			
113.43.c.11. Economics. The student understands how geography influences economic activities. The student is expected to: 113.43.c.11.B. identify the factors affecting the location of different types of economic activities, including subsistence and commercial agriculture, manufacturing, and service industries; and 113.43.c.11.C. assess how changes in climate, resources, and infrastructure (technology, transportation, and communication) affect the location and patterns of economic activities.			
113.43.c.14. Government. The student understands the processes that influence political divisions, relationships, and policies. The student is expected to: 113.43.c.14.A. analyze current events to infer the physical and human processes that lead to the formation of boundaries and other political divisions.			

113.43.c.16. Culture. The student understands how the components of culture affect the way people live and shape the characteristics of regions. The student is expected to:

113.43.c.16. B describe elements of culture, including language, religion, beliefs and customs, institutions, and technologies; and

113.43.c.16.C explain ways various groups of people perceive the characteristics of their own and other cultures, places, and regions differently.

113.43.c.17. Culture. The student understands the distribution, patterns, and characteristics of different cultures. The student is expected to:

113.43.c.17 .D. evaluate the experiences and contributions of diverse groups to multicultural societies.

113.43.c.18. Culture. The student understands the ways in which cultures change and maintain continuity. The student is expected to:

113.43.c.18.A. analyze cultural changes in specific regions caused by migration, war, trade, innovations, and diffusion.

113.43.c.22. Social studies skills. The student communicates in written, oral, and visual forms. The student is expected to:

113.43.c.22.B. generate summaries, generalizations, and thesis statements supported by evidence;

113.43.c.22.D. use standard grammar, spelling, sentence structure, and punctuation; and

113.43.c.22.E. create original work using proper citations and understanding and avoiding plagiarism.

113.43.c.23. Social studies skills. The student uses problem-solving and decision-making skills, working independently and with others, in a variety of settings. The student is expected to:

113.43.c.23.A. plan, organize, and complete a research project that involves asking geographic questions; acquiring, organizing, and analyzing information; answering questions; and communicating results; and

113.43.c.23.C. use problem-solving and decision-making processes to identify a problem, gather information, list and consider options, consider advantages and disadvantages, choose and implement a solution, and evaluate the effectiveness of the solution.

The Climate of College: Planning for Your Future

Introduction

This activity challenges you to think about life after high school: Where do you hope to be? What do you want to be doing? More importantly, what is it going to take to get there, and what will the environment be like once you arrive?

Directions

Getting Started

1. Read through the Student Notes.
2. As a class, discuss the concepts behind setting goals, planning for the future, identifying future career options and/or college majors, and understanding the culture of a college, from fellow students to the local climate surrounding the school of one's choosing.
3. As a group, watch and discuss the video: "Inspirational - How Great I Am."
4. Watch the next video, "Setting Goals is Vital to Achieving Results." Discuss what it means and how you can learn from it.
5. Watch the final video, "Create Your Ideal Life With Goal Setting." Focus on the video's content and consider what the video means and how it applies to your life. What will you do next?
6. Collaboratively explore the online article "Goal-Setting Guide."
7. Work with a partner to discuss your future hopes and career aspirations. Consider what will be involved for you to successfully reach your goal. Discuss your results as a class.
8. As a class, discuss factors that might affect your future environment or the people living there, such as: geographical landmarks, culture, intellectual identity, socioeconomic influences, multiculturalism, ethnicity, inclusionary/exclusionary factors, etc.
9. Complete Part I of the *Overall Assignment* handout.

Investigating

1. Begin the research component by looking for practical information about your chosen field or major and the college or university of your choice. During your time on the Internet, keep notes about important findings and print out information that may be helpful to you in the future. Make an organizational system to keep track of this information. Consult the *Credibility of Websites Rubric* to help you determine which websites to use for your research.
2. Show the information you have found to your instructor and discuss your conclusions.
3. Complete Part II of the *Overall Assignment* handout.
4. To transition from research to goal setting, complete the *Making Goals Reality Check* handout and evaluate your results.
5. Review the *SMART Goal-Setting Chart* as a class and process the results.
6. Complete Part III of the *Overall Assignment* handout.

Drawing Conclusions

1. Answer the questions in Part IV of the *Overall Assignment* handout. Use your answers to guide the construction of a 3-5 page position paper. Begin drafting your essay, using the aspects of technology that will help you present your findings with more clarity (charts, graphs, etc.).
2. Conduct peer review activities with your classmates as directed by your instructor.
3. Revise your draft. Turn in a final essay.

Overall Assignment

To receive credit for this assignment, you need to complete each of the following segments or parts:

- I. **Goal selection.** Identify what you hope to be doing after graduation. Why is this chosen path important for you? Why have you selected it? Consider:
 - What do I already know about my chosen field and/or major?
 - What do I already know about the college or university I hope to attend?
 - What do I still need to know?
 - How will I fill in my knowledge gaps?

- II. **Research.** Explore the Internet and find out what those in your field are doing and what advice they give. Find and reference four sources from the Internet, a guidance counselor, and/or the library. Then answer these and other questions:
 - What is the most important thing I need to know to get where I want to be?
 - What activities should I be doing or classes should I take to help with my preparation?
 - What are the keys to success in my field?
 - How can I get from where I am now to where I want to be?
 - What will the people be like where I am going?
 - What is the feel of the surrounding town or city?
 - How would I describe the environment in which my chosen school is set?

- III. **Goal planning.** After your research, you need to set long-term, intermediate, and short-term goals for yourself. What will it take to get to your desired destination? **Identify your goals: by semester, by year, and throughout college.** Also, break down these goals into three areas: **academic, extracurricular (i.e., work, athletics), and personal.** You can create a chart if it makes this section easier to organize.

- IV. **Reflection.** Once you have completed the above pieces, answer these questions:
 1. What did I learn from this activity that I didn't know before?
 2. What previous information was confirmed?
 3. What did I learn specifically about the culture of my chosen school or university?
 4. What will I need to do to prepare myself for this culture?
 5. What must I do differently to reach my goals?
 6. What can I change immediately? What changes will take time to implement?
 7. What am I already doing well that I should keep doing?
 8. What is important to me?
 9. How does my answer to #6 affect my goals?
 10. Why are academic goals important? Personal goals? Social goals, including family? Other goals, including health goals?
 11. How are the above goals similar? Different? How do the differences affect your ability to complete any or all of them?
 12. Create a timeline that represents how you will complete ALL of the goals you have just set.

Credibility of Websites Rubric

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Authorship and Credibility	The author(s) are always recognized as experts in their field. Company, institution, publisher, or organization has a consistently credible reputation.	The author(s) are generally thought of as experts in their field. Company, institution, publisher, or organization has substantial credible reputation.	The author(s) are occasionally recognized as experts in their field. Company, institution, publisher, or organization has sometimes a credible reputation.	The author(s) are not recognized as experts in their field. Company, institution, publisher, or organization has rarely a credible reputation.
Content	The content is highly appropriate for the subject and is supported mostly by details, examples, or statistics.	The content is generally appropriate for the subject and is supported <i>substantially</i> by details, examples, or statistics.	The content incompletely meets the needs of the subject and is rarely supported by details, examples, or statistics.	The content does not meet the needs of the subject and provides almost no details, examples or statistics.
Accuracy	Information can be validated by other sites. Spelling and grammar is mostly flawless.	Information can be validated by most sites. Spelling and grammar is substantially flawless.	Information can sometimes be validated by other sites. Spelling and grammar is rarely flawless.	Rarely can information be validated by other sites. Spelling and grammar have significant errors.
Advertisement	Site contains no consumer-driven content.	Site contains minimally consumer-driven content.	Site contains substantial consumer-driven content.	Site is mostly consumer-driven.

Making Goals Reality Check

Directions

Below is a list of goals that are either realistic or unrealistic. Next to each of the ten listed goals, you will either write a “U” or an “R” next to each goal statement, depending on how you feel that specific goal applies (or doesn’t apply) to your life goals. Provide support for why you think the goals are either realistic of unrealistic. For the ones you feel are realistic, rank them in order of their importance to you. Analyze the results with your class.

1. I Am Going To Be Rich And Famous.
2. I Am Going To Have A Job That I Really Enjoy.
3. I Am Going To Live To Be 100 Years Old.
4. I Am Going To Own A Large House.
5. I Am Going To Have Kids Someday.
6. I Am Going To Graduate From the College of My Choice.
7. I Am Going To Graduate With Honors.
8. I Am Going To Work Out On A Regular Basis.
9. I Am Going To Be Kind And Courteous To Everyone I Meet.
10. I Am Going To Try My Best To Succeed In All Of My Endeavors.
11. I Am Going To Fit In Wherever I Go
12. Making Friends Will Be Easy

SMART Goal-Setting Chart

SMART Goal Setting in 5 Easy Steps		
Step	Mnemonic	Description
1	S pecific	Exactly what is it you want to achieve in your business and to what extent? A good objective statement or goal should answer the question "which, what, who, where, when, why"?
2	M easurable	You need to be able to track the progress and measure the outcome. A good objective statement should answer the question "how much or how many"?
3	A ction oriented	Say what you are going to do. A good objective statement should describe a result .
4	R ealistic & Relevant	The objective should be challenging but realistic and also relevant to your business. Objectives may appear optimistic initially, but as you develop strategies to achieve them they become realistic.
5	T ime based	Objectives should include a time limit. A good objective statement should include " By when " do you want to achieve your result?

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