

Summer Reading List

The staff at Student Life Career Counseling and Support Services has compiled a summer reading list of some of our favorite career related books. Please enjoy them this summer and share with students.

Luck is No Accident: Making the Most of Happenstance in Your Life and Career

By John D. Krumboltz and Al S. Levin

In the career field we have historically focused on career decisions and career planning. However the authors say, "...we don't want you ever to make a career decision again." (page 23). They suggest a career decision is typically interpreted as a permanent commitment to one occupation. They also make the point there is not one best occupation that leads to a good and satisfying life. Since we as people and the world in which we live are always changing, they say it is far better to keep an open mind to explore, make choices and avoid tunnel vision. Throughout the book, the authors address how unexpected and unplanned events often influence our lives. They encourage the reader to make the most of these events to create career and life opportunities. The book gives many examples of people, circumstances, their stories and what they gained that led them to their next positive situations. It also has numerous questions for reflection.



Books

I found the book to be a quick and easy read. While I thought it was a bit repetitive, it was definitely worthwhile and I will recommend it for students. I particularly liked the positive focus and the idea that being undecided is not necessarily a problem, but can be very useful. The writing is optimistic, invites risk taking, values mistakes and encourages creating your own luck! ~ Dr. Christina Rideout

Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation

By Parker J. Palmer

Palmer does a superb job of relating to many readers who may be experiencing similar things in their lives in relation to choosing a vocation. This book includes Palmer's own experiences and how to find one's calling, how to face the fear of the unknown by having faith in one's path even though there are "alien lands" ahead, how to handle the feelings of anxiety and depression associated with the journey, as well as how using leadership skills and finding a sense of community can help with the entire process. Because this book allows the reader to connect to so many aspects of what I would consider common for the process of discovering one's career path, I would recommend this book to anyone who could use some guidance in their vocational journey. ~ Corey Boyer



Book

Throughout his book, I felt Palmer rooting me on. Although I found myself longing for more details in Palmer's story--more narrative in his narration--I still grasped his overarching message: one should not force oneself into a box, but construct one's own.

In a juxtaposition to his ever-confident voice, Palmer illustrates a time where he felt anything but confident. The most valuable part of the book is the section in which Palmer discloses his struggles with mental illness. Palmer stated that he and another woman attempted to get to the reason why some people who suffer from this depression complete suicide and why some do not. Palmer showed his humbleness by admitting that he

“really [had] no idea.” To transform before readers’ eyes from an unsure, fragile state to a state of confidence and humility can inspire readers to travel not around, but through, any pain and obstacles they may face on their professional journey. Palmer’s book is not for those who enjoy straight-forward messages; I often found myself becoming frustrated by the way he waxes poetic about following one’s own heart and vocational desires. This book is for those who are lost--or foresee themselves becoming so--and how going off the track might be the best option for making your way back. ~ Lacey Caparanis

Designing Your Life

By Bill Burnett and Dave Evans

Written by two design professors at Stanford University, *Designing Your Life* walks readers through practical strategies for designing a career (and life) that they love. The authors use the concept of design thinking to help people approach the problem of finding a fulfilling career. They counter the common myth that finding a career you love is all about finding your *one* passion. Rather, they encourage readers to examine what they believe work is for, to develop a compass and approach their career as a series of prototypes meant to solve the problem of enjoying work. The design thinking concept makes the idea of designing a career path alluring rather than burdensome and the very practical strategies can yield some pretty terrific insights. Highly recommended for anyone who feels their career needs improvement—from the first year student who has no idea where to start to the faculty or staff member who enjoys his or her current position but whose career needs a little tweaking to make it that much more fulfilling. ~ Jacqui Hoke



Paint Palette

The Alchemist

By Paulo Coelho

For my summer reading list book I recommend my favorite book, *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho. This is a book that I try to read at least once a year. Each time I learn something new and interpret things in a new way. The story depicts a boy as he completes a journey full of risk, loss and success as he leaves home and sets out to find his destiny. The biggest lesson for me, as it relates to finding your career, is to appreciate the journey, wherever it will take you. There are lessons that can help us find happiness from every experience we have and every person we meet along the way. Its message can be especially helpful for students who feel paralyzed and believe they need to have their entire path figured out, including the destination, before they take their first step. This lesson can also be especially useful when it comes from faculty and staff whose experience has taught them this reality. The book is a simple quick read that will be fun for students over the summer. ~ Ryan Wilhelm



Path in the woods

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