The Effects of Life Design Career Counseling on Public Relations Students’ Self-Efficacy and Career Indecision

A project completed in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Honors Program

by

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between life design’s career counseling techniques and the effect on career indecision and self-efficacy in a sample of 17 senior undergraduates. Rooted in Arthur Bandura’s concept of self-efficacy (1994) and John Krumboltz’s social learning theory (1976), life design, created by Bill Burnett and Dave Evans, employs design thinking to create a meaningful life. The study utilized a mix methods longitudinal approach. Participants completed Burnett’s and Evan’s survey during three phases. The survey measured mindset, confidence, and career indecision in relation to life design tactics. Data results revealed increases in self-efficacy, despite job search discouragement during the third phase of the study. The hope is that research from this study may be applicable to career counseling centers, particularly at educational institutions.

Key words: career counseling, life design, self-efficacy, career indecision
Career Counseling Background

Whether graduating after four years of college or reflecting on forty years in the workforce, creating a career that one loves stands as a difficult challenge facing people of all ages. According to a study by Adkins, 68% of people are doing work that they do not love (2015). The high degree of employee disengagement leads to unfavorable outcomes such as lost productivity and profits for not only for the individuals, but also for the organization (Adkins, 2015). Workers are unclear how to pursue a career of interest and financial stability.

Branches of study such as philosophy, sociology, and psychology, simultaneously attempt to solve the age-old question of “What should I do with my life?”. Known formally as career counseling, this field of study focuses on the process of making career-related decisions and formulating, or in some cases, adjusting a career path (Van Esbroeck & Athanansou, 2008). Career counseling seeks to help the individual regardless of age. The majority of studies focus on the emerging adulthood population or the time period from “late teens through the late 20s, during which people in modern societies explore opportunities and identities in many important areas such as relationships, lifestyle and career” (Oishi, 2012, p. 13). Emerging adulthood sees the most drastic change in career path, but career indecision can happen at any stage (Oishi, 2012). The popular idea of the midlife crisis, sometimes caused by impending change between the ages of 45 and 64, has been circling mainstream media and the minds of baby boomers since its introduction by psychologist Elliot Jacques in 1965. Career uncertainty remains relevant regardless of demographics. Over the years, career counseling has utilized several methods to aid making decisions concerning career choices. This area of research has evolved over the course of the past few decades as evidenced by numerous peer reviewed journal articles,
extensive work by career counselors, and plentiful theories that populate the field of career counseling.

**Career Counseling and Popular Theories**

The life design framework examined in this paper is heavily influenced by John Krumboltz’s social learning theory (1976), Arthur Bandura’s self-efficacy concept (1994), Donald Super’s life-span theory (1996), John Hollard’s occupational themes theory (1997), and John Krumboltz’s happenstance theory (1999). Career counseling notes that while each theory has its own perspective and approach to career decision-making, there is not one that claims to be the best option; rather, these theories provide a plethora of information and leaves the individual to decide what theoretical approach to use (Van Esbroeck & Athanansou, 2008).

*Life-Span Theory*

The life-span theory was created by Donald Super, an American psychologist, in the 1950s (Savickas, 1994). At the time, career counseling, or vocational counseling as it was called, was viewed as a one-time choice; the right occupation would match the individual’s personality and that occupation would fit the person throughout his or her entire life (Staunton, 2016). However, Super (1996) argued that career exploration acts as an ongoing process throughout the individual’s life; a career grows and changes over time. Super reflected upon this in his life-span theory (1996), which has a focus on how careers unfold over a life-span and assumes that the life span can be broken up into several different stages based on the effect of the individual. However, arguably the most revolutionary idea of Super’s theory is the idea of the evolving self-concept. Self-concept focuses on how the individual sees himself or herself and how he or she would like to be seen around others. The life span theory suggests that self-concept changes over time and this impacts
career choices, creating a vocational identity (Super, 1996). As a result, Super (1996) concludes that the individual uses this self-view to identify career goals and plans through the stages of life.

The life-span theory (Super, 1996) throws a wrench in traditional career exploration theories by shifting the responsibility of career decision from the counselor to the client. According to Super, since career exploration and interests tie in to how the individual sees himself or herself, the client becomes the expert (1996). The counselor encourages the individual to create his or her own career based on the understanding of self. As self-concept evolves, Super sees the individual’s role changing depending upon the stage in life (1996). Career stages will not always perfectly align with age. However, Super points out that self-concept does not stay permanent (1996), changing and evolving with time and experience.

Super’s theory remains relevant today because of its idea of the evolving self-concept (1996). However, the theory does not completely satisfy its critics. Critics argue that while the life roles might have fit in the 1950s when the theory was first created, the roles are now outdated (Sharf, 1997). Other critics suggest that Super’s theory (1996) places too much emphasis on the role of the individual and not enough on the influences from social factors such as the environment (Fitzgerald & Betz, 1994). While relationships with others are important to Super, the theory does not take into account the cultural differences that affect the role of family. Despite these criticisms, Super’s career development theory (1996) continues to be one of the most cited career development theories used in career counseling.

*The Occupational Themes Theory*

John Holland was an American psychologist and professor of sociology at John Hopkins University (Hansen, 2011). These backgrounds play an important role in his career counseling theory. Holland first discussed his theory in his 1958 article in the *Journal of Applied Psychology*. 
Holland revised and adapted the theory several times leading up to his death in 2008 (Hansen, 2011). As a result, the theory has several names ranging from the vocational choice theory to the Holland codes. For this discussion, Holland’s theory will be called the occupation theme theory (1997) which views career interests as an expression of an individual’s personality and should be taken into account when examining career choices. Holland (1997) divides the personality into six categories or themes known as the RIASEC codes. RIASEC stands for the codes’ names: realistic, investigative, artistic, social, enterprising, and conventional. Holland believed that people could have two or more dominant themes that would help them find their ideal occupation (1997). Work environments could also be categorized into corresponding themes that could help match an individual to the best environment (Holland, 1997).

Each theme has its own set of characteristics of work environments and occupations that would best suit an individual’s interests. Through a series of personality questions, Holland (1997) tests and concludes which theme or themes best fit the individual. The questions are theme specific and the answers could indicate whether or not the individual fit that theme. Realistic people are considered to be the doers of the world who enjoy hands on activities, act practically, tend to love nature, and act athletically (Nauta, 2010). A common personality question could be “do you like to work with your hands?” The other themes had similar questions based on the characteristics of the theme. The theory suggests that an individual can be described by one or more of these six themes and then find a corresponding career path and environment that will best suit his or her vocational personality (Holland, 1997). Choosing the best theme helps pick the most compatible environment. According to Holland, the more compatible the environment, the more likely an individual succeeds in his or her career (1997). Career counselors utilize Holland’s theory (1997) because it has “an air of simplicity to it” (Staunton, 2015a). With thousands of career possibilities,
it can become overwhelming, but Holland allows the individual to narrow his or her selection based on personality and work preferences (1997).

While the theory has its followers, the occupational themes theory is not without its critics. Detractors of occupational themes theory argue that it could be too simplistic (Arnold, 2004). People or even jobs can fit into more than one theme. Additionally, critics dislike the passive role of the individual as most of the determination of which theme suits best can fall to the counselor or a survey (Staunton, 2015). Critics state the individual should have an active role instead of having counselors decide on personality themes (Bullock, Andrews, & Braud, 2009). Perhaps the largest critique is the theory does not take into account social factors such as race or gender and how these factors impact career determination (Arnold, 2004). However, Holland’s theory (1997) remains as a “helpful starting point for identifying interests” and narrowing down the multitude of career fields that exist (Staunton, 2015a).

The Social Learning Theory and Happenstance Theory

While Holland ignores social factors, John Krumboltz considers them the heart of his social learning theory’s argument (Krumboltz, Mitchel & Jones, 1976). The social learning theory centers around the idea that career decisions are influenced by factors such as genetics, environment, learning experiences and task approach skills (Krumboltz, et. al., 1976). Genetic traits such as physical appearance may influence an individual to model where as an individual with an affinity for playing the piano may focus on music composition (Staunton, 2015c). Environmental factors include influences that one might associate with decision making such as education, culture, economic status, and political preference (Krumboltz, et. al., 1976). Learning experiences refer to the role models or experiences that were instrumental in developing the individual’s perceptions about careers and his or her own career path. The last factor, task approach skills, are skills that
were learned or influenced by other factors such as a learning experience or a specific environment (Krumboltz, et. al., 1976). Tasks approach skills include problem-solving or goal setting (Krumboltz, et. al., 1976). One of the consequences of making career decisions based upon social influences is that the nature of the field or career might be misunderstood or may be viewed as unrealistic. Krumboltz suggests that the goal of career counselors should be to help the individual identify what his or her career views and how social factors shape them (1976). By having a better understanding of the individual’s view of a certain career, together they can identify limitations and problems that such a view creates (Krumboltz, et. al., 1976). A counselor can help create better lives for his or her client by reframing some of the mindsets.

Another key goal for counselors is to address the anxiety clients may have over not achieving career goals (Staunton, 2015c). Career indecision becomes a common source of anxiety, but Krumboltz takes a different approach compared to other theorists who see indecision as a limitation that prevents the individual from reaching his or her goal. Krumboltz (1999) states that because of the complexity of a constantly changing world, unforeseen circumstances can happen at any moment and indecision is just a natural response. This idea comes from Krumboltz’s happenstance theory (1999) and expands upon the ideals in the social learning theory (Staunton, 2015c). The happenstance theory (1999) states that career planning is not a useful tool because of the uncertainty of the future. According to the happenstance theory (1999), careers can occur through unexpected events, so the individual must be open to new opportunities that may occur unexpectedly (1999). A career counselor helps an individual recognize key factors in his or her career and prepare for the unexpected. Krumboltz recommends the development of 4 main attitudes; curiosity, persistence, flexibility, and optimism (1999). By maintaining these attitudes, an individual can seize career opportunities that occur in the moment (Staunton, 2015c).
Self-Efficacy

Arthur Bandura’s social cognitive theory influences the life design framework, especially the concept of self-efficacy (1994). Super’s self-concept (1996) expands upon the idea of self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is the “belief in one’s ability to influence events that effect one’s life and control over the way these events are experienced” (Bandura, 1994, p. 72). In short, an individual’s confidence level of whether or not career choice can be achieved will influence the actions he or she takes. Bandura (1994) bases his theory around this idea of self-efficacy and its relationship between outcomes and career decisions. Bandura (1994) states that the counselor’s job focuses on helping an individual increase his or her self-efficacy and encourages the individual to pursue a career that matches his or her interests. Self-efficacy differentiates itself from self-concept, but the two are tightly connected. Self-concept influences self-efficacy. Both are influential in the field of career counseling.

Life Design, a New Technique in Career Counseling

Most of the aforementioned career counseling theories have been studied significantly over the past decades with theories such as Donald Super’s life-span theory (1996) or John Holland’s occupational themes theory (1997) having been studied for over 50 years. As a result, several new studies and career exploration tactics have used these contemporary approaches as the foundations for a new breed of career counseling which includes life design. Life design is a process that uses foundational approaches of the social learning theory (Krumboltz, et.al., 1976), life-span theory (Super, 1996), occupational themes (Holland, 1997), and happenstance theory (Krumboltz, 1999) to encourage individuals to design their way forward.

At the heart of life design is the premise that an individual can think like a designer and build not only a career, but his or her life. Similar thinking appears in Donald Super’s life-span
theory (1996) which supports the idea that career counseling should expand beyond just finding a job. Evans and Burnett, the authors of life design and the book *Designing Your Life*, follow this mindset by marketing their life design to everyone, stating that “life is all about change and growth” (2016, p. XXI). To practice life design, the authors encourage mind sets that will be helpful in using the tools and tactics provided. The designers encourage curiosity and reframing - mindsets that Krumboltz (1999) also encouraged. Other mindsets that life design encourages are bias to action and collaboration. Collaboration has long been a part of career counseling theories. Both Krumboltz (1976) and Super (1996) emphasize the effect that others have on decision making and career paths.

While the ideals of life design borrow from previous theories, it differentiates itself through its tactics and the design thought process that permeates throughout its framework. In their 2016 book, *Designing Your Life*, Burnett and Evans include eight tactics that can be used to help build a life worth living. The authors place emphasis on the idea of “building” a way forward, instead of thinking a way forward (2016). Each of these tactics is viewed as a building block to achieving the ideal life and overcoming career challenges (Burnett & Evans, 2016). In the first tactic, life design encourages the individual to focus on where her or she is at now by analyzing sociological factors: health, work, love, and play. Evans and Burnett (2016) call it the health/work/play/love dashboard; a method that works similar to car gauges. Instead of measuring gas or tire pressure, this dashboard measures health, work, play, and love. The health/work/play/love dashboard acts as a metric to use beyond career decisions to take note of the degree of work/life balance is at. As Super’s (1996) research supports, having a career is an essential part of someone’s life, but the career does not encompass the entire lifespan (Evans & Burnett, 2016). Having time to play and relax, and even as an adult, is important to happiness (Burnett & Evans, 2016).
The second tactic that the authors discuss is building a moral compass that aligns with the individual’s perspective of work and life, called the workview and lifeview. Lifeview addresses “the ideas about the world and how it works” (Burnett & Evans, 2016, p. 31). Workview concerns how someone views the workforce. By creating workview and lifeview reflections, the individual understands his or her values and what should be considered when evaluating not only career options, but life choices.

After having established what the individual believes, life design encourages him or her to keep an activity log, or a “good time journal”, that allows him or her to reflect on his or her experiences. Burnett and Evans use the good time journal to track periods of high engagement and energy; cues to “find your way, even if you don’t know where you are going” (2016, p. 43). The idea of journaling reflects back to Hollard’s occupation themes (1997). According to the theory, an individual enjoys occupations that relate to his or her interests. Burnett and Evans state that by tracking periods of high energy and engagement throughout the day, clients can discover what interests them (2016). Similar periods of low energy and engagement suggests dislikes for those activities. The good time journal encourages writers to record and reflect on social aspects that may have contributed to the high energy and engagement such as environments, interactions, or objects. As exemplified in Krumboltz’s social learning theory (1976), life design suggests that social aspects play a role in career decision. To gain a better understanding of what does and does not interest the individual, good time journals are recommended to be kept for a minimum of a week (Burnett & Evans, 2016, p. XX).

From the information gathered from the good time journal logs, the individual creates a minimum of three mind maps around the ideas, interests, and social factors that were shown to create high engagement and energy. “Mind mapping works by using ...word associations...to open
up the idea space and come up with new solutions” (Burnett & Evans, 2016, p 70.). Mind maps develop a method to become “unstuck” from career indecision. By using word association, the individual can allow his or her ideas to flow freely and discover his or her interests. The authors remind the reader to not get hung up on “anchor problems” or circumstances that cannot be changed regardless of the career path (Burnett & Evans, 2016). Mind mapping acts as a technique to help create career paths, but also to reframe an understanding of a problem (Burnett & Evans, 2016).

Using the mind maps from the last exercise, the individual creates odyssey plans. Odyssey plans imagine three versions of the next five years of the client’s life (Burnett & Evans, 2016). The odyssey plans answer three different questions; “the thing you would do”, “the thing you would do if option 1 was gone”, and the “thing you would do if money and image was no object” (Burnett & Evans, 2016). Odyssey planning creates the foundation for the next life design tactic, prototyping.

Satisfied with his or her odyssey plans, the individual prototype the plans or test the “lives” and see if they are worth pursuing. Life design encourages a bias-to-action mindset; to be committed to “building your way forward”, even if it means multiple prototypes. Prototyping allows the individual to take action, ask questions and judge whether personal bias or assumptions are correct. Life design encourages a prototype method known as a life design interview. A life design interview gathers information about an individual’s story, not just what he or she does on a day to day basis at work. While prototyping involves an informational “interview”, the interview is more of a conversation and less of a job application. Creating a prototype experience exemplifies another option that the individual may pursue to discover what interests him or her. Common prototype experiences include internships, job shadowing or observing. Prototype experiences
allow individuals to do the things that they are interested in or hinted at in their mind maps and odyssey plans (Burnett & Evans, 2016).

After prototyping, life design takes a focused look at failures. Similar to how Krumboltz (1999) redefined uncertainty, life design suggests that failures are not bad. Failures mean progress. Something did not work out. Reframe and adjust to see what did not go as expected. Failure and success both offer learning experiences that can be used to build a new life. The failure reframe exercise encourages the individual to learn from his or her mistakes. In this exercise, the individual writes down failures and then categorizes the failures as either a screw-up, a weakness, or a growth opportunity.

The final tactic that life design encourages resonates with several other career counseling theories; to build a team. Research suggests that building relationships with others is crucial and can impact the self-efficacy levels that individuals feel when creating career decisions (Oishi, 2012). Life design encourages collaboration. When creating a support team, life design breaks it down into various roles; supporters, players, and intimates. Supporters represent the people who care about the individual, encourage him or her, and are willing to provide feedback. Players characterize those who actively participate in the tactics that the individual uses to design his or her life. These can be the people the individual shadows or interviews. The last group, the intimates, symbolize close friends or family that are directly impacted by the individual’s life design, although they may not have an active role in it. These people can be the most influential on an individual’s life. After sharing resources and earning trust, a team becomes a community aimed at “investing in the ongoing creation of each other’s lives” (Burnett & Evans, 2016, p. 211). With the support of a community, built forward by the other life design tactics, life design suggest
that a well-designed life is possible as long as clients remain curious, try new experiences, reframe problems, understand it’s a process, and ask for help (Burnett & Evans, 2016).

Life Design Implemented in Public Relations Students

In the field of public relations and marketing communications, there are a plethora of career opportunities (Martin & Wright, 2016). Whereas majors such as pre-med have a defined path, public relations acts more broadly in terms of career paths, ranging from marketing specialists to speech writers. With many choices, students exhibit uncertainty about their futures (Molleda, 2009). To see if life design could provide any aid in calming such fears, a class of 18 students, comprised mostly of graduating seniors, were exposed to life design tactics over a 16-week semester course. The purpose of this study is to see if life design increases self-efficacy in these students and allows for decisive career making in a field that is known for its wide variety of paths. Additionally, the study seeks to analyze and apply the claims of the book to a specific classroom, to validate life design’s tactics and that career counseling can be done by the individual alone, without the benefits of a counselor or a classroom setting. The study hopes to have practical applications, with the potential for life design tactics to be expanded to aid students of all majors and in centers for career development.
Methodology

Research Design

The methodology section includes a brief discussion of participants and consent, survey instruments, and an overview of the research methods. The study utilized a mixed methods longitudinal approach. These methods included quantitative analysis of Likert scales and qualitative word analysis.

Participants

A sample of 17 participants was obtained from a Catholic liberal arts university in the Midwest. Public relations undergraduates who were enrolled in a senior seminar in the spring of 2017 were recruited by direction solicitation at the start of semester. Of the 17 participants, 5 were male and 12 were female.

Consent

Participants were provided with a general description of the survey, followed by a consent form. The form assured that all responses would be confidential and that no identifying information would be used. Additionally, the consent form assured the participants that participation was voluntary and that opting out of the study was permitted at any time. Written consent was obtained before the study proceeded.

Survey Instruments

Demographic information was collected in the first and third phases of the study. Participants gave information about age, gender, and academic year. Please see appendix C for demographic questions. The life design instrument was utilized to assess and measure life design tactics and self-efficacy. See appendix B for survey questions and format. The measurement consisted of nine questions. Six of the questions were measured against a Likert scale which
ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The Likert questions were used primarily to measure self-efficacy in relation to life design tactics. An example of an item from this scale is “I am confident in my ability to plan a career”. The other three questions were short answer in nature. The three short answer questions were created to measure the students’ opinions on the process of life design itself such as whether or not the participants found life design helpful or unhelpful. An example of a short answer question used is “Do you find life design helpful or a hassle?” An additional question was asked in the third phase of the study. This question asked phase three participants what life design instruments, if any, they had used since the seminar ended.

Procedure

The longitudinal study was conducted in three parts. The study consisted of qualitative analysis of the three phases’ short answer responses and quantitative analysis of the Likert scale responses. The first phase began on the first week of the class. Prior to the first day of class, demographic information was gathered from the cohort of students, including age, gender, academic year, and major. These questions can be found in appendix C. The second phase of the study began at the end of the 16-week long course where the cohort was administered the same life design survey. The third phase of the study began 6 months after the seminar ended. An electronic version of the life design survey was administered to the participants. Please see appendix B for survey questions.
Data Results and Analysis

**Likert Scale Results**

*Figure 1.* Figure 1 acted as a measure of reframing opinions about degrees. From phase one to phase two, there was a positive increase in agreement with the statement, possibly because of the time period. The participants were preparing to graduate college and were applying to several jobs within their career field. Looking for a job that did not relate to their degree most likely did not cross the participants’ minds. In phase three, 46% of participants felt neutral about the statement and 36% strongly disagreed with the statement. Life experience had caused a change in opinions about the statement “my degree determines my career”. Therefore, it would be reasonable to see a change in participants’ responses, most now disagreeing with the statement in phase three.
Figure 2. The focus of this question also pertained to the reframe and curiosity mindsets, but from a job interview angle. The question, “when in an interview, I focus on my need to find a job” is meant to challenge beliefs about the job search process. Life design suggests that instead of an individual looking for a job, look for a company that would be the best fit for the individual’s values (Evans & Burnett, 2016). In phases one and two, a majority of participants agreed with the statement. Thinking back to the application process, getting a job was the goal of many college graduates, not to find the best fit. The pressure to get a job is emphasized more than getting a job that would be the best fit. As one participant described, “[it] depends on your financial situation. If you have no money than obviously, employment at all is your first priority, but if you have choices consider them carefully.” At the end of phase three, 45% responses disagreed with the statement, while an additional 27% strongly disagreed. Similar to the first question, being out in the workforce for six months helped to emphasize the idea of reframing a situation, looking at it from a new perspective.
Figure 3. The focus of this question was to see if the life design process would increase confidence and happiness not only in career aspects, but everyday life. Figure 3 shows that overall happiness increased from phase 1 to phases 2 and 3. Over 50% of participants agreed in phases 2 and 3 that they felt happy with where they were in life. There was a correlation between participants that were unemployed six months after the class concluded and participants that disagreed with the statement. Overall, by the end of phase three, participants felt happier than when the study first began.
Figure 4. This question focused primarily on whether or not self-efficacy increased from life design tactics. In phase two, 50% of responses agreed with the statement “I am confident in my ability to plan a career”, with an additional 29% saying they strongly agreed with this statement. Compared to phase three, there were decreased responses that strongly agreed and agreed with the statement. A majority of participants still agreed with the statement, but at 45%, with an additional 27% strongly agreeing with the statement. What was interesting in phase three was the increase in responses that were neutral to the statement. At 27%, the responses were still lower compared to phase one, but had risen 6% from phase two. This change in neutrality to planning a career is possibly due to the participants’ job searches and discouragement of not yet finding a job. In phase three, one participant commented, “I want a different job rather than a receptionist or cashier… I sort of know what I want to do with my life, but I don’t know when I’ll get there.” Another possibility that one participant mentioned was how he or she felt about life design. One participant thought life design was helpful “[depending] on the person, if lists and charts are a good way to keep [yourself] accountable.” While confidence may have been affected by external factors such as personality or job search, overall confidence increased.
from phase one by 11%. More participants agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “I am confident in my ability to plan a career” compared to the first phase of the study.

**Figure 5.** Figure 5 measured self-efficacy and career indecision with the phrase “I know what I want to do with my life”. In figure 5, the graph shows an increase in agreement with the statement, especially from phase one of the study. Looking at the graph, there is an overall decrease in responses that strongly disagree from phase one where the percentage was at 23% to 0% over the next two phases. A majority of the participants agreed in phases two and three that they knew what they wanted to do with their lives. While this majority agreement did see a decrease in phase three by 19% possibly due to job search discouragement, there was also an increase in participants who strongly agreed by 11%. Several participants in the second phase mentioned how life design had helped them identify career paths and make decisions. One participant commented:

“I’ve often found myself very indecisive on choosing a specific career choice/path, but *Designing Your Life* seemed to extend the tools I needed for confidence and helping to create new ways to discover what area of work I genuinely want to do…I see [life design]
being impactful and beneficial to my future and certainly intend to use different aspects of it to help me out in my future”

The reflection brings up an interesting point. Not only did this participant feel better about deciding on what a career path, but attributed the newfound confidence to life design. These comments continued in the third phase of the study. One participant remarked, “I am more confident that I can do many things. I just need to prototype my way forward.” Although life design is not mentioned directly with this comment, one of the tactics, prototype experience, is attributed as helping the participant increase confidence in career decisions. Life design increases self-efficacy, but as with all major changes, the new-found efficacy is challenged during the job search.

**Figure 6.** The focus of this question also measured self-efficacy in career development, especially with the tools and tactics illustrated in life design. Compared to phase one of the study, participants felt more prepared to create a best possible life. A majority of the participants agree with the statement “I have the tools/strategies to figure out my best life, make a plan, and then execute it” by more than 50% in both phases two and three. There was a significant
decrease in participants that strongly agreed with the statement in phase 3, as well as an increase of participants that felt neutral to the statement. Despite the difficulties of job searching, most participants felt better prepared after the life design class concluded.

Figure 7. This figure represents the results from an additional question asked in the third phase of the study. The focus of this question was to see what life design tactics, if any, the participants found useful and continued to apply in their lives and outside of the classroom. Shown in figure 7, over 90% of the participants had applied for an internship or a job and over 70% had networked with a professional. The cohort of students that participated in the study had a median age of 22.5 years old. The average age of the participants was 22.2 years old. The participants ages attributed to the life design tactics utilized. Given that many of the participants were about to enter or had already joined the workforce, applying for a job or networking with professionals is unsurprising. However, what was interesting was that over 63% of participants had done journaling, meditation, or some form of self-reflection in the past six months. Life design focused heavily on self-reflection in several of its tactics including in lifelive and workview reflections, good time journals, and mind mapping techniques. One participant
commented during phase three, “I have continued to journal so I can determine what works best for me. Mind mapping is good for brainstorming”. Another participant said, “the reflection in good time journal has helped me figure out how to spend my time in a way that’s more enjoyable.” Phase three continued the trend of positive reactions to the forms of life design reflection as participants had spoken highly of self-reflection in the second stage of study as well. In phase two, one participant commented, “I think I will use the workview/lifeview to keep myself focused”. Another participant in phase two talked similarly about using life design tactics in the future, remarking, “I see myself using the principles. Using the daily journals really reflected how unstable I was with my emotions. I seemed to have found a grasp on that and will continue to do journals”. The results of this question are not entirely surprising when accounting for the age of the participants. However, considering that a majority still utilized the unique reflection methods infers that life design has long term applicability and use outside of a classroom setting.

Short Answers

There were three short answer questions in the first two phases of the study: What is life design?; Why would someone use life design?; Is using life design helpful or unhelpful? Below are samples of the qualitative words and responses.

The first question, “What is life design?” focused on if/how the participants’ opinions changed over time and sought to determine if they fully understand the goals of what life design aims to achieve. In the first stage of the study, 69% of the participants talked about life design as some form of plan, whether it was creating, organizing, or executing a plan. With no prior understanding of what life design is, vague answers, such as “planning”, were to be expected. In the second phase, the word “plan” was mentioned in 42% of the responses, a 27% decrease.
Participants had more variety in their responses, defining life design as “a way to look at failures”, “figuring out what you want” and “prototyping multiple lives”. The second phase responses to the question referenced life design tactics such as the failure reframe exercises and the prototype experiences. The change in responses infers that participants gained a wider understanding of what life design entailed and the tactics that stood out. In phase two, 33% of participants mentioned achieving happiness. Beyond “making a plan”, life design is creating a happy, fulfilled life using tactics such as failure reframe and prototyping. From the responses during phase two, the participants clearly showed an understanding of this fact.

The second short answer question asked why participants would use life design. The answers in the first phase were similar to the last question. 46% of participants mentioned the life design is useful in creating plans. An additional 33% of participants viewed life design as helping to achieve some form of happiness. The goals of life design are to help formulate some plan that helps participants to achieve goals, whether it be happiness or finding a job. However, to do so, participants must engage with the life design tactics. In the second phase, participants used more active verbs to describe why an individual would use life design. Common phrases included “accomplish goals”, “create a meaningful life”, “actively participate in choices”, and “design a happy life”. Participants acknowledge the active role required, but also the heart of life design. Life design is a process that takes time.

The third and final short answer response asked if participants thought the life design process was helpful or not. In the first phase, 62% of participants agreed that life design appeared helpful thus far. However, one participant commented that while he or she could see some of the benefits, he or she “would not have chosen to do it without the class”. A similar sentiment was echoed by 38% of participants who agreed the life design could be both helpful
and a hassle. One of the more common complaints was that life design was time consuming. Because of the lengthy process, “life design can appear overwhelming” according to one response. In the second phase, 75% of participants agreed that life design was helpful, an increase of 13%. After the class ended, more students saw the value of the process, despite the lengthy time frame. 25% of responses saw pros and cons to life design. Again, participants mentioned the drawback of time required. Another critique was that the process would not work for every person, such as someone who “goes with the flow”. However, in both phases one and two, 0% saw life design as completely unhelpful. While life design has its drawbacks, there is still value in the process.

**Discussion**

The purpose of the study was to see if life design positively increased self-efficacy and decreased career indecision among the cohort of participants. The results found that life design had a positive impact on the cohort of participants not only at the end of the class, but six months after graduation. The Likert scale questions revealed that participants did experience decrease self-efficacy from phases two to three. During phase three, participants experienced job search discouragement, which affected confidence and self-efficacy. The decrease in self-efficacy during phase three, implies that while life design is easy to conduct in a secure environment such as college, when put to the test, participants must actively maintain tactics such updating their love/play/work/health dashboard to avoid career indecision and preserve the confidence created during the initial participation in life design. However, despite the decrease, participants still felt more confident compared to phase one. Figures 4 and 6 show that not only did the cohort feel more confident about making career decisions, they believed that the strategies from life design will help them in the future, particularly when it came to methods of self-reflection. There was a
decrease in responses that felt confident in career planning. However, with some participants still looking six months after graduation, job search discouragement created apprehension about building a career. If an individual did not find a career before graduating or even six months after graduating, confidence can feel shaken.

Additionally, experience in the job field and search process saw more participants agreeing with reframe mindsets. The first Likert scale question measured the reframe mindset. A dysfunctional belief that the authors disagree with is the idea that creating a career is determined by a college degree (Burnett & Evans, 2016). Life design suggests that careers are not solely dependent upon degrees. An individual has a variety of paths available to them that may not relate at all to his or her college degree. Mindsets of curiosity and reframe were key to life design tactics and were encouraged constantly by the authors. By the time of stage three, the participants had been exposed to the workforce and looking for job. Some participants had been searching for the past six months and, to no avail, could not find a job in their field. This could have led to the increase in the responses that disagree with the statement, “my degree determines my career”. After being in the workforce for a while, some might have had to search for a job outside of public relations or in a field that was not previously considered. In phase three, most participants had changed their opinions and disagreed with the statements, engaging in a reframe mindset.

The heart of life design is not just to achieve a good job, but a well-balance happy life. Result shown in figure 3 show an overall increase in happiness in respondents. There are other factors in life that could account for this positive change in attitude, but it would not be unreasonable to assume that life design played a role. One of the biggest changes that occurs for college graduates is the process of finding and procuring a job. Life design increased the
confidence and ability to not only find a job, but create a life that left participants feeling happy. Participants that had a plan or held a job felt more satisfied with their position in life. The job search can be a discouraging process which may account for the increase in responses that disagreed with the statement, “I am happy with where I am in life”.

A common problem that the participants faced was identifying interests and job titles that they could pursue in their job fields. Public relations has a wide array of career possibilities, but narrowing it down to one that fit the participants’ interests proved challenging for them. Life design provided unique tactics that analyzed interests through journaling, self-reflection, and mind mapping. The mind maps and good time journals were among the favorite tactics of the participants. 64% of participants continued to use self-reflected methods after the class had ended. There is an active requirement involved throughout the life design process. Participants become their own counselor. They must hold themselves accountable for creating their own odyssey plans and keeping record of their good time journal, among other tactics. Unlike Holland’s occupation themes (1997), the interests were discovered by the participants, not by a counselor. While this active requirement takes time, 100% of respondents believed that there was some value to life design despite its cons.

**Limitations**

The study was limited in terms of participants. The course was specific to senior public relations majors, narrowing down the pool to about 17 participants. Qualitative research methods were used, which admittedly made the research findings subjective and only applicable to the participants studied. However, the process of analyzing interests through self-reflection proved as a valuable tool that could be applicable across a wide range of individuals.
Several participants noted that while life design was helpful, the amount of time spent could be a hassle to some. Life design focuses on the active role of the individual and requires participation. For example, good time journals are recommended to be kept for at least a week according to Burnett and Evans (2016, p. XX). The other steps, lifeview and workview, mind maps, prototype, odyssey planning, can require several hours to sit down and perform. For the participants, these activities were discussed and sometimes completed in class. However, most of the time, they were required to complete the life design tactics on their own time and turn in as assignment. Further analysis may infer that participants treated life design as a class assignment, something to get done with to graduate it. If not taken seriously, life design will not work. As one participant said, “I think I would find life design very helpful and beneficial although some people don’t have the time or desire to sit down and plan it out.” There lies the truth. Participants have to embrace life design and have a desire to change their lives. There is an active role required of the participant and that is not fulfilled, the results will not be what he or she expected.

**Future Considerations**

Subsequent studies may find it beneficial to conduct similar research using a larger sample size and a more diverse background. This sample would be better representative of the population. Additionally, this study was conducted using longitudinal methods. It would be interesting to see the applicability of the results long term. For example, where did the participants end up a year after the seminar course ended? The idea of the seminar also brings up an interesting point. This study was conducted at a university, an environment which cultivates learning. Subsequent studies may find it intriguing to examine other common environments such as an office to see if environment has any direct or indirect impact on self-efficacy and career indecision.
Summary and Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to test the claims of Bill Burnett’s and Dave Evans’s book, *Designing Your Life*, and discover if there was any applicability to undergraduate public relation majors. The book was tested in terms of self-efficacy and career indecision using a longitudinal mixed methods survey. The results showed that participants did experience positive increases in self-efficacy and decreases in career indecision overall. However, during phase three, there were significant increases in career indecision and decreases in self-efficacy. Qualitative analysis of participants’ responses infers that job search discouragement may be to blame. Further analysis of responses revealed that participants who actively engaged in life design tactics, such as updating a good time journal, saw positive increases confidence and overall decreases in career indecision. Life design is not an easy solution to the question “what should I do with my life?” However, if a participant is willing to explore and take the time to properly try life design’s tactics, the odds of creating a meaningful life is in his or her favor. The hope is that research from this study may be applicable to career counseling centers, particularly at educational institutions.


Fitzgerald, L.F., and Betz, N.E. (1994) "Career Development in Cultural Context: The Role of


Quarterly, 434.


Appendix A

OHIO DOMINICAN INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF RESEARCH INVOLVING THE USE OF HUMAN SUBJECTS
PLEASE TYPE ALL APPLICATIONS, ATTACHMENTS, ETC.

1. Title of Project: (Tentative Title) Is Life Planning Peaceful or Painful?

2. Anticipated starting and completion dates: 01/17/17 to 05/17

NOTE: Project may not start prior to approval from the IRB, you may put "after approval".

3.a This project may be exempt from full board review: ✓ If yes, submit Form B with this application.

3.b This project may be eligible for expedited review: ✓ If yes, submit Form C with this application.

4. This project may be conducted on an annual basis: Yes

From / / To / / __

5. Principal Investigator: Emily Schofield
Department or Affiliation: Honors Program/ Public Relations Department
Telephone: (614) 940-2715 Email: schofield@ohiodominican.edu
Name of chair/supervisor: N/A
Email of chair/supervisor: N/A

PI Undergraduate: ✓ Graduate: Faculty: Staff: Other: __

status: __

Students and outside researchers must provide their current address:
3393 Grovepark Dr., Grove City, OH 43123

6. If you are a student or outside researcher, please provide the following:

Type of project: Thesis/Essay: ✓ Independent Study: Class Project: Other: __

Course # & Name: PRS 479 Core Analysis & Experience

Faculty Sponsor: Natalie Kompa Dept: Public Relations

Faculty Email: *kompan@ohiodominican.edu Phone: w.14-451-4699

NOTE: A research proposal by a student or outside researcher must have the following statement signed by a faculty sponsor:

I have examined this completed form and I am satisfied with the adequacy of the proposed research design and the measures proposed for the protection of human subjects. I will take responsibility for informing the student or outside researcher of the need for the safekeeping of all raw data (e.g., test protocols, tapes, questionnaires, interview notes, etc.) in a University office or computer file.

*Definitions: Research means a systematic investigation, including research development, testing and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to general knowledge. Human subjects are involved in a project if it utilizes data derived from human responses, observations of human beings or human materials, whether such data are obtained directly from human resources or from secondary sources.
Signature of Faculty Sponsor

Date

12/14/16
7. If the project is submitted for external support, indicate the agency under consideration:

   Is notification of Human Subject approval required?  
   Yes  √ No

8. Provide a brief statement of the research problem and a short justification:

   **Research Problem:** Does life design increase the chance of happiness and therefore, increase productivity at work?

   Justification: It's common to hear today that people are unsatisfied with their lives. However, is there a science that can improve the way people live. In the book *Designing Your Life* by Bill Burnett and Dave Evans, the authors make the case that life design creates thriving and happy lives. Is this true? More importantly can this research be applied to the workforce? Satisfied employees tend to be more productive and a greater asset to the company. By examining this theory of life design, I hope to see if there is any practical application that may be used in HR policies/practices and the careers of PR & Marketing Communications students and professionals.

9. Participants
   a. Indicate which, if any, of the following groups will be research subjects (check all that apply):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minors (under 18)</th>
<th>Senior Citizens (over 65)</th>
<th>Terminally Ill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>Prisoners</td>
<td>Cognitively Impaired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-English Speakers</td>
<td>Mentally/Physically Disabled</td>
<td>Pregnant Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional Residents</td>
<td>Employees</td>
<td>No Special Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Subject Populations (by Race, Ethnicity, Sex, or Religion)</td>
<td>Other (specify):</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   b. If any of the above groups are selected, state the rationale for using special groups.

   In the course PRS 479, I will be examining students to see if life planning and goal setting are beneficial when applied at a young age (early 20s), right before graduation or after the individual has expectations set after experience in the workforce. To measure this, I will survey students at the start of the course, the middle of the course, and then at the end of the semester. By doing so, I will be able to measure if there is any improvement in their perceptions about how life and career may unfold.

   c. What is the approximate number of subjects to be recruited?  
      30

   d. How will the subjects be solicited (check all that apply)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advertisements*</th>
<th>Letters</th>
<th>Random Calls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Telephone Lists</td>
<td>Notices</td>
<td>Direct Solicitation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   √ Other (specify): Students who are participating in PRS 479

   *NOTE: Any type of advertisement, letter, or notice to be used must be submitted to and approved by the IRB. Submit verbatim copies.
10. Informed Consent. See examples on the F Drive for detailed information on informed consent requirements. If the materials do not meet the requirements for informed consent, a revision may be requested.

a. Provide copies of all materials. Written consent is the preferred method. What type of consent will be used (check all that apply)?
   See examples on the F Drive for the difference between assent & consent.

   - [ ] Written Consent
   - [ ] Oral Consent
   - [ ] Parental Consent
   - [ ] Teacher Consent
   - [ ] Assent for Minors
   - [ ] Information Sheet
   - [ ] Waiver
   - [ ] Approval from School District or Organization
   - [ ] where Research will be conducted

b. Are participants informed that they may withdraw at any time without penalty?
   - [ ] Yes
   - [ ] No
   If no, explain rationale.

c. If a written consent will not be used, describe the rationale for this decision.

   N/A

d. If oral consent will be used, describe how consent will be documented. Provide script for oral consent.

   N/A

e. If minors will be participating and a parental consent form will not be used, explain the rationale.

   N/A

f. If minors ages 7 to 17 will be participating, and an assent form for minors will not be used, explain the rationale.

   N/A

g. If you are requesting that consent be waived, explain why. Cite relevant literature where possible.

   N/A
11. Methodology: Describe how the research will be conducted.

The research will be conducted primarily through a survey, which will be distributed three times over the course of the semester. The first survey will be administered during the first week of class before any information on life design is presented to the class. The second survey will be administered at the halfway point of the class to see if there are any changes in productivity and life satisfaction. The final survey will be administered at the end of the semester to see if there are any tangible results that may prove or disprove the validity of life design.

In addition to surveys, I will conduct a series of in-depth interviews with individuals in the workforce who have been exposed to the ideas of life design as well as those who have not. Participants will be given a copy of the questions a week in advance to allow them time to remove themselves from the research if questions appear uncomfortable or the interviewee no longer wishes to participate. Individuals will have identifiers for names and titles. The organization where participants work will not be name, but the general field (such as human resources or healthcare) may be mentioned. The goal is to see the application of life design extends beyond the classroom and into the workforce. Additionally, I hope to discover if life design is better conducted before or after entering the workforce.

12. Data Collection, Analysis, Reporting, and Storage

a. Data collection methods (check all that apply). Provide copies of tools, including interview script if used.

- [ ] Questionnaire or Survey
- [ ] Interview
- [ ] Observation
- [ ] Video or Audio Taping
- [ ] Computer Collected Task Data
- [ ] Archival Data
- [ ] Intervention
- [ ] Focus Groups
- [ ] Testing/Evaluation
- [ ] Instruction/Curriculum
- [ ] Physical Tasks
- [ ] Other:

b. Will the data be collected with identifiers? X Yes No
   If yes, will the data be rendered anonymous for analysis? X Yes No
   Will the data be rendered anonymous for reporting? X Yes No

See materials on the F Drive for an explanation of anonymity, confidentiality, identifiers, and IRB concerns regarding data collection.

c. Describe how the consent forms and other material will be distributed and collected to protect confidentiality.

Before the surveys are distributed, a consent form will be distributed two days prior to the survey to allow participants the option to leave the research. Additionally, those participating in the in-depth interviews will be given the consent form as well as the interview questions a week in advance to allow for participants to have the choice of leaving the research.

The consent forms will be collected manually and stored in a file system that only the primary researcher has access to. The consent forms will have no personal information, except for the name. During research analysis, all student participants will be kept anonymous. In-person interviews will have their positions and their names kept anonymous in data analysis, with the consent of the participant. The organization or place of employment will not be used,
but the general field will be mentioned (for example, human resources or healthcare). If a consent form has not been collected, the participant will not be surveyed/interviewed.

d. Describe security of the data, including where the consent forms and other material will be stored, who will have access, and how and when the material will be destroyed. Note that consent forms should be retained for three years after the end of the study.

The data will be collected and analyzed on a computer that only the primary researcher has access to. Software security on this computer is up-to-date and the data will be password protected. No personal information of respondents will be included in the data analysis. Physical consent forms will be kept in a locked file cabinet that only the primary researcher has access to. Should materials need to be destroyed, the physical consent forms will be shredded and the digital data will be deleted from not only the computer, but any back-up hardware. The consent forms will be deleted approximately three years after the end of the study.

e. If deception or experimental manipulation is used, explain why deception and/or manipulation are necessary (as opposed to convenient) for this study. Please include plans for how and when subjects will be debriefed. If a debriefing statement will not be used, explain why.

N/A

13. Risk Factors: A research participant is considered to be at risk if he or she may be exposed through the procedures of the planned experiment to the possibility of physical or mental harm, coercion, deceit or loss of privacy. The most obvious examples of placing participants at risk of harm include administration of unusual physical exertion, deceit and public embarrassment or humiliation. Coercion may be present when the potential participants are not able to exercise their right to decline participation, particularly when the researcher is in a relationship of greater power over the participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Criteria</th>
<th>CHECK ONE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>With respect to any of the above criteria, participants are at risk.</td>
<td>Yes ✓ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental drugs will be used.</td>
<td>Yes ✓ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential for medical problems exist.</td>
<td>Yes ✓ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants may experience physical discomfort.</td>
<td>Yes ✓ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants may experience mental discomfort.</td>
<td>Yes ✓ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical equipment will be used.</td>
<td>Yes ✓ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants will be tape recorded, photographed, or videotaped.</td>
<td>Yes ✓ No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b. Does any part of this activity have the potential for coercion of the subject? Yes ✓ No

If yes, explain and describe the proposed safeguards.

c. Assess the likelihood and seriousness of risks (physical, mental, or other) to the subjects and describe alternative methods that would not entail comparable risks and why these were not used.

There are no serious risks associated with this research.
e. If the research subjects will be compensated or rewarded, indicate the type and amount of compensation and the milestone for each payment. If subjects are being recruited from ODU classes indicate whether students are receiving course credit (regular or extra credit) and, if so, what alternatives are offered to those students who do not wish to participate in research.

There will be no compensation offered for partaking in the study.

14. Certification Statement

In making this application, I certify that I have read and understood Ohio Dominican University’s policies and procedures governing research with human participants (specifically, the policies and procedures for the protection of human subjects as described in Ohio Dominican University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) Policy). I shall comply with the letter and spirit of those policies and will not undertake the research without IRB approval. Furthermore, I am aware that certain departments may have their own standards for conducting research, and it is up to me to familiarize myself with them. I further acknowledge my obligation to: (1) obtain written approval of significant deviations from the originally approved protocol BEFORE making those deviations; and (2) report immediately all adverse effects of the study on the participants to the Chairperson of the Institutional Review Board and the Chairperson or Supervisor of my Department.

Principal Investigator signature

[Signature]

Date

12/13/16

15. Co-Investigators

a. Name: N/A Title: 
Signature: N/A Affiliation: 

b. Name: N/A Title: 
Signature: N/A Affiliation: 

16. Submission Information

Submission is in electronic format. Attach copies of all pertinent materials such as cover letter, consent form, questionnaire, survey, debriefing statement, advertisements, etc. Email this packet (the application and all pertinent materials) to:

IRB@Ohiodominican.edu

The submission of incomplete packets will significantly delay the review. Forms and policy guidelines are available on the F Drive under Institutional Review Board. For questions, comments, or assistance in completing the form, contact the IRB Chair at IRB@ohiodominican.edu.
Appendix B

SURVEY QUESTIONS
Please circle the answer that corresponds with your response to the question.

1. My degree determines my career.
   | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

2. When in an interview, I focus on my need to find a job.
   | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

3. I am happy with where I am in life.
   | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

4. I am confident in my ability to plan my career as graduation approaches.
   | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

5. I know what I want to do with my life.
   | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

6. I have the tools/strategies to figure out my best possible life, make a plan, and then execute it
   | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

Please respond with a few sentences to the following questions
1. What is life design?

2. Why would someone use life design?

3. Is using life design helpful? Or a hassle?
4. Any other thoughts? (Optional)

Electronic Survey Questions from Phase 3

1. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Other (please specify)

2. What is your age?

- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21
- 22
- 23
- 24 or older
3. Please select the items that have you done in the past 6 months

☐ Conducted an informational interview
☐ Did a self-assessment (such as a personality or career interest test)
☐ Applied for an internship or job
☐ Volunteered in a field of occupational interest
☐ Networked (e.g. emailed a contact, met new people who could help you professionally)
☐ Wrote, practice, or gave an elevator speech

☐ Other (please specify)

4. After reading *Designing Your Life*, I believe that my degree determines my career

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Additional Thoughts (please specify)
5. After reading *Designing Your Life*, I believe that during an interview I should focus on getting a job, not whether I fit in with the company.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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<tbody>
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Additional Thoughts (please specify)

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6. After reading *Designing Your Life*, I feel confident in my ability to plan my career.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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</table>

Additional thoughts or Other

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7. After reading *Designing Your Life*, I know what I want to do with my life.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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Additional Thoughts (please specify)
8. After reading *Designing Your Life*, I have the tools and strategies to figure out my best possible life, make a plan, and then execute it. 💚

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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</table>

Additional Thoughts (please specify)

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9. After reading *Designing Your Life*, I feel happy with where I am in life. 🙃

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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Additional Thoughts (please specify)
Appendix C

Demographic Questions

Please answer the following questions. If you feel uncomfortable answering any of the questions, you may opt to skip the question and proceed to the next. If you do not feel comfortable answering any demographic questions, notify the administrator.

1. What is your age?

2. What gender do you identify as?

3. Please circle the academic year that best applies to you.
   
   Freshmen
   Sophomore
   Junior
   Senior
   Other_______________________
LIFE DESIGN CONSENT FORM
You are being asked to take part in a research study of how life design effects college students in the field of public relations.

What you will be asked to do: If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to answer a series of survey questions three times over the course of the next five months (semester). Your answers will be recorded anonymously. Only your name is requested for the sake of consent to participate in this study. No other personal information will be collected.

Risks:
At this time, there are no apparent risks anticipated with the study. Review of survey questions do not appear sensitive. However, participants are allowed to skip questions that make them uncomfortable or appear sensitive.

Your answers will be confidential: The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report the researcher makes public, it will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you. Research records will be kept in a locked file; only the researcher will have access to.

Taking part is voluntary: Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. You may skip any questions that you do not want to answer. If you decide to not take part or skip questions, it will not affect your grade in this class or your relationship with the university. If you decide to take part, you may withdrawal at any time.

If you have any questions: The researcher conducting this study will be Emily Schofield. Please ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, please contact Emily Schofield.

You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep in your records.

I have read the information above and have received answers to any questions I may have. I consent to take part in this study.

Your Signature__________________________________ Date___________________

Your Name(Printed)______________________________