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ABSTRACT

The Career Development Center at Troy High School in Fullerton, California, is largely effective because of the variety and abundance of materials and resources located in the Center. However, the most unique feature of the program is the instructional course taught in the Center, "Life Decision Making." The course is an elective for juniors and seniors in the high school. The goal of the Center and its related course is to help students think about themselves and the direction that their lives will take, and in relation to this, to learn and participate in the decision-making process. All students may use the Center on a drop-in basis. The Center also offers programs in vocational training, occupational exploration, and work experience. (Author)

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**CASE STUDIES IN PRACTICAL CAREER GUIDANCE
NUMBER 2**

Career Development Center

Troy High School

Fullerton, California

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NUMBER 2

Career Development Center
Troy High School
Fullerton, California

Carol Ann Arutunian

American Institutes for Research
in the Behavioral Sciences
Palo Alto, California
June, 1973

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U.S. Department of
HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
Office of Education
Office of Planning, Budgeting, and Evaluation

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This case study is one in a series of thirteen which was produced by the Youth Development Research Program of the American Institutes for Research under contract with the Office of Planning, Budgeting, and Evaluation of the U.S. Office of Education. The purpose of the contract was to examine the practical career guidance, counseling, and placement which is provided to noncollege-bound secondary level students. As part of the effort, programs which are making an illustrative attempt to deal with the needs of noncollege-bound youth were identified and described in case studies. Case studies have been written on the following programs:

1. Baltimore Placement and Follow-up Program
Baltimore City Public Schools
Baltimore, Maryland
2. Career Development Center
Troy High School
Fullerton, California
3. Career and Educational Planning Program
Pioneer Senior High School
San Jose, California
4. Career Guidance Program
Hood River Valley High School
Hood River, Oregon
5. Computerized Vocational Information System
Willowbrook High School
Villa Park, Illinois
6. Coordinated Vocational and Academic Education
North Gwinnett High School
Suwanee, Georgia
7. Developmental Career Guidance Project
Detroit Public Schools
Detroit, Michigan
8. Employability Development Team
Cleveland Public Schools
Cleveland, Ohio
9. Job Development Program
Cleveland Public Schools
Cleveland, Ohio
10. Kimberly Guidance Program
Kimberly High School
Kimberly, Idaho
11. Lenawee Vocational-Technical Center and Placement
Program
Adrian, Michigan
12. Occupational Learning Center
Syracuse City School District
Syracuse, New York
13. Youth Career Action Program
San Jose Unified School District
San Jose, California

Other products of this contract include Practical Career Guidance, Counseling, and Placement for the Noncollege-Bound Student: A Review of the Literature, and the project's final report which is entitled Planning, Structuring, and Evaluating Practical Career Guidance for Integration by Noncollege-Bound Youth. The final report outlines a planning-evaluation model which program personnel may use in developing local career guidance counseling and placement services.

**CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER
TROY HIGH SCHOOL
FULLERTON, CALIFORNIA**

Abstract

The Career Development Center at Troy High School in Fullerton, California, is largely effective because of the variety and abundance of materials and resources located in the Center. However, the most unique feature of the program is the instructional course taught in the Center, "Life Decision Making." The course is an elective for juniors and seniors in the high school. The goal of the Center and its related course is to help students think about themselves and the direction that their lives will take, and in relation to this, to learn and participate in the decision-making process. All students may use the Center on a drop-in basis. The Center also offers programs in vocational training, occupational exploration, and work experience.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER

I have learned a lot more about myself, my values, and my future goals. The program stimulates you to think on your own, to make your own decisions.

--Gary

Introduction

Gary, a junior at Troy High School, located just southeast of Los Angeles in Orange County, reacted as quoted above to the Career Development Center and a related course offered through the Center.

Many diverse activities are associated with the Career Development Center and the related course: "Days vary a lot. One day I listened to interviews on a tape, another day I studied about different jobs and listed personal advantages and disadvantages of each." Some students begin the course by taking personality and interest inventory tests. They may work alone or in small groups on units, called "Learning Activity Packages" (LAPs), over two-week time periods. All LAPs are self-directed. A day's activities vary depending on what LAP a student has elected to take. Some days students work alone, other days there are small group discussions with other students or the teacher. Gary's days are diverse, as are those of most of the students at the Center.

All students at Troy High School (ninth through twelfth grades) may use the Career Development Center on a voluntary drop-in basis, and many are given assignments there by their teachers. The Center is open from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., and students typically use the Center during their free periods. Approximately 2,000 student visits were recorded in each quarter of the 1972-73 school year. The facilities of the Center, housed in a 1,300-square foot carpeted room at the high school, include a wide range of audio-visual equipment and a large amount of library resource materials about occupations, community colleges, and four-year colleges and universities.

A semester-long course offered through the Center, entitled "Life Decision-Making," is an elective in the English Department. It is open to all eleventh- and twelfth-grade students. The course is designed to help

students think about themselves and the direction that their lives will take. The general purposes of the course are to:

1. Encourage and assist students in personal assessment of interests, aptitudes, and abilities.
2. Encourage students to form a noble self-concept and to consider realistic alternatives for the implementation of this self-concept in life style and career decisions.
3. Encourage students to recognize different life styles and to identify influences affecting the choice of life style.
4. Help the students experiment with the process of career decision-making
5. Help the student develop satisfying life goals.

Each student proceeds at his own rate toward these goals.

Another service provided by the Career Development Center is the weekly Guest Speakers Program. The selection of speakers is based on students' interest in a particular vocation or profession and represents a wide range of the working world. Representatives from the forest service, jewelry making, insurance, banking, and social work are typical examples.

In addition to the facilities, course, and speakers program, students have the opportunity to experience the realities of a work setting through the Work Experience Program, which is organized and operated by the Work Experience Coordinator. Approximately 150 students participate in this program, and they are placed in work settings in which they have indicated some interest. In many instances, they receive school credit, money, or both for such activities.

The personnel engaged in carrying out the functions of the Career Development Center are: (1) the Project Director, an Assistant Principal in the school; (2) two teachers who instruct the Life Decision-Making course; (3) the Center Director; (4) a Career Guidance Specialist (5) two para-professionals who have responsibilities relating directly to helping students find and use the Center's resources, and who perform secretarial tasks as well, and (6) student aides.

Origin of the Project

The idea for the Career Center was born approximately four years ago. The Counseling Department became interested in writing objectives for the

department. It realized that not enough was done in the way of vocational guidance for students. Its first attempt to rectify the situation consisted of having each freshman spend one period a week in a career guidance course. This attempt was unpopular with students and unsuccessful in meeting the needs of students. No teachers were assigned to it, and no space was allocated for resource materials.

A needs assessment that led to the creation of the project was conducted in the late 1960s and administered to 1,500 students throughout Orange County. The results of the survey, called the Priority Counseling Survey, showed that 78% of the students could not name their strongest abilities and interests, had only a vague notion of a career possibility, and expressed a need for help in educational and career planning. The staff at Troy took this information as an indication of the status of their current guidance and counseling service in this area and developed their program to meet these needs.

A committee was set up in 1970 with one teacher, one counselor, one administrator, and several community members (representatives of local businesses and industries). The committee met monthly for a year to discuss possible alternatives for a career guidance program and plan an imaginative and helpful program. From these meetings, the concept of the Career Development Center emerged. The Center at Troy High School and the Life Decision-Making course began in September 1971.

The Career Development Center and related activities at Troy are administered by an Assistant Principal (Project Director) in the school. He oversees and coordinates the three major activities of the project: (1) the Career Development Center; (2) the Life Decision-Making course; and (3) the Work Experience programs. The Project Director also serves in an administrative liaison role among the program, the school, and the district administrators.

Current Status of the Project

Target Population

Troy High School has a population of approximately 2,400 students. It is located in Fullerton, a suburban city with a population of about 100,000 in Orange County, California. Some 99% of the school and district population lives in suburban areas, including small urban areas of 5,000 to 50,000

people. Principal businesses and industries in the area are light, clean, and concentrated in the electronics and aerospace fields. Agriculture, particularly citrus farming and picking, is also a major industry.

The area Troy serves has a predominantly white, upper middle class population. Minorities make up less than 10% of the population, Spanish surname students constitute the largest minority, less than 5% of the school population (10% in the district). Some 85% of the school population comes from families with annual incomes of more than \$15,000. The remaining 15% of the students come from families with annual incomes of \$6,000 to \$15,000. The Center serves equal numbers of males and females.

Troy High School gives an annual questionnaire to graduating senior students. Educational-vocational goals for the most recent graduating class were as follows: 25% will attend four-year colleges or universities; 30% will attend two-year colleges or vocational-technical programs; 19% will take a job after leaving high school; 5% will enter the Armed Forces; and 10% have indefinite future goals. The remaining 11% fall into "other" categories.

Goals and Objectives

The course in Life Decision-Making is designed to help students think about themselves and the direction that their lives will take. The specific goals and objectives of the course are defined in terms of behavior and performance objectives. These objectives are listed below:

1. Each student will be able to list his aptitudes and interests as measured on standardized tests (GATB, KUDER). Each will participate in small group interpretation sessions.
2. Each student will explore a minimum of nine career areas using a variety of career materials. He will be able to write a brief description of each, detailing education or training required, probable salary, job outlook, personal advantages and disadvantages, and so on.
3. Each student will be able to complete a standard application for employment, letter of application, and personal resume.
4. Each student will participate in a simulated interview. This interview will be videotaped, and each student will write a short personal critique of his performance.
5. Each student will be able to construct his own conceptual models of family structures.

6. Each student will participate in career and family life seminars conducted by community volunteers.
7. Each student will begin to think seriously about his values, goals, plans, and so on. He will keep a daily confidential, personal journal of his thoughts about himself and his future.
8. Each student will make a videotape of himself.
9. Each student will formulate behavioral objectives and goals for himself.
10. Each student will read one required book and a minimum of two books of his own selection as well as various articles, essays, and poems for class discussion.
11. Each student will choose additional exploratory activities, such as field trips, career fairs, picture displays, or student-initiated activities with teacher approval.

Project Staff

All Career Development Center staff were employed in the school before the project was initiated. As an Assistant Principal in the school, the Project Director oversees all Center-related activities. He offers suggestions to staff members, acts as a link between the administration and the Center, and at times serves in a liaison role between the school and community resources. He is always on the lookout for additional funds for the program. Generally, the Project Director provides a climate in which the program may operate effectively.

Two teachers instruct several sections of the Life Decision-Making course each semester. Both participated in developing the program, including the creation of course content and materials. One teacher has a background in communications and has taken courses in the counseling field. The other teacher was formerly a member of the Troy counseling staff. Both teachers recognize the value of students' learning more about themselves and their future. The teachers are open and honest with the students, and students are able to respond with trust toward the teachers.

The Career Development Center Director is in charge of Center operations. She has a business background. The duties she has in directing the Center occupy part of her time, including inventorying materials and equipment, collecting data, keeping files on students who come into the Center, keeping materials up to date, and making contacts with the community for the

Guest Speakers Program. The remainder of the Center Director's time is spent in coordinating the Work Experience Program and placing students in job settings that relate to their interests, abilities, and mesh with their school schedules.

Two paraprofessionals (one full-time paid worker, one part-time volunteer) work in the Center. Their responsibilities include scheduling and confirmation of the speakers and a variety of secretarial-clerical duties. They also work directly with the students in the Center in helping them locate materials, in explaining how to use audio-visual equipment, and in answering questions students may have about the Center. The full-time paraprofessional was a secretary in the Counseling Department before joining the Center staff.

Another member of the Career Development Center staff is the Career Guidance Specialist, who is also an economics teacher at Troy. He spends part of his time placing students on jobs in various settings and roles. He is also employed part-time by the North Orange County Regional Occupations Program (ROP), an Orange County public agency providing job training and experience for students of all ages in the region. His participation in the ROP and Work Experience programs results in his spending considerable time in the field arranging potential job settings and placements for students.

The other staff members of the Center are two student aides who assist students with the use of equipment and location of materials.

Facilities, Materials and Student Activities

Troy High School allocated 1,300 square feet for the Career Development Center at the high school. All equipment and resource materials are located in the Center, which is equivalent to two classrooms in size, is carpeted, and contains multipurpose furniture. Equipment includes standard audio-visual hardware such as slide and film projectors, tape recorders, view decks, and viewers. Software includes career kits, films and filmstrips on careers, and extra film for creating local career films. Also available is a sizable body of printed material.

The materials used in the Life Decision-Making course at Troy were developed by the course instructors. Students can select an Individual Learning Activity Package (I-LAP) or a Group Learning Activity Package (G-LAP). Each LAP takes two weeks to complete. At the completion of one

LAP, students select another one. Students receive feedback on their performance through a grade and comments from the teacher. Also at the end of each LAP students share the LAP they have studied with another student who has not taken the LAP to provide an overview and information from which the second student can decide on his own interest in taking the LAP.

The Life Decision-Making course and its methods and activities are structured so that students begin making decisions at the first class meeting. Each student picks his own approach to the class. Each student is required to take two Individual LAPs and two Group LAPs and must hear 12 speakers and see 10 films throughout the semester. Susan's reaction reflects this method's outcome:

You get to work on your own--arrange your own time, your own pace. There is no specific daily schedule. The procedures have increased my awareness of opportunities and helped me make decisions about what I want to do.

Susan is taking an I-LAP where activities are carried on individually. Certain LAPs require the use of audio-visual equipment. Others require conducting research outside the Career Development Center. G-LAPs are conducted in groups of 20 to 25 students. Students spend the time discussing and interacting with their peers and teacher about their feelings and experiences related to the topic of the G-LAP. For example, they may listen to music and discuss reactions to it, or discover prejudices or biases in themselves and others through an attitude reaction survey and discuss these with classmates and teacher.

Individual LAPs include:

1. Career Exploration
2. Who Am I?
3. Sensory Awareness
4. You and Your Life Script
5. Winners and Losers
6. Identity and Autonomy
7. How Well Do I Know Myself
8. Field Trip to Junior College
9. Field Trip
10. I A Woman
11. I A Man
12. My Life Style
13. Marriage and Family Life

Group LAPs include:

1. Increasing Your Communication Skills
2. Individual Responsibility
3. Games and Defenses
4. Resolving Conflict Constructively
5. Acceptance of Self and Others
6. Sensory Awareness
7. The Development and Maintenance of Trust
8. Interpersonal Skills
9. What Am I Really Good At
10. What Personality Type Am I
11. Your Values and Your Life
12. You and Your Childhood
13. Identity--Man and Woman
14. Getting Married
15. Having Children
16. How Do I Interview

In addition to the I-LAPs and G-LAPs, students can also decide on an Anything LAP. There a student develops his own course of study, and creates his own activities. Anything LAPs are added to the other LAPs so that other students can choose to use them.

The activities and materials in the course are designed and selected on the basis of student needs. Students choose what they want to learn more about--their values, interests, specific jobs, professions, colleges. This procedure increases student involvement, thereby allowing them to play a central role in the decision-making process.

Books used in the course include: The Art of Loving, Future Shock, The Greening of America, The World of Work, The Prophet, and others that the student has selected. Films and filmstrips include "What's Your Bag?", "Getting a Job," "You and the Right Job," "Should You Go to College?", and a variety of career films. Speakers are selected from the business and professional community depending on students' expressed interests. Students also help determine the field trips they take through their indicated interests.

Tests are taken in the course on an elective basis. Some of the tests given in the course are: General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB), Non-Verbal Interest Inventory, California Occupational Interest Inventory, Self-Appraisal and Assessment Structure (SAAS), Meyers-Briggs Personal Inventory, Ohio Vocational Interest Survey (OVIS), and KUDER.

In addition to the LAPs, personal inventory tests, audio-visual equipment, field trips and speakers, the Center houses a wide variety of other

materials and resource information for students in their job explorations. These include: college catalogues, simulation games and kits (SRA), career files (free information from business and industry), manpower booklets on trends; VIEW microfiche (a listing of all jobs in the Orange County area, updated every year), California Occupational Guides, The Occupational Outlook Handbook, and many additional reference works.

The Life Decision-Making course is mainly conducted in small group settings. Students work independently when they are taking an I-LAP. Large group presentations occur only when a large number of students elect to see a film or a speaker. The teacher's role gradually moves from that of instructor to that of counselor. The students generally express feelings that they have learned much about themselves and others in the class. A sharing experience takes place. Nancy's feelings illustrate this:

The parts of the program that have contributed most to realizing my feelings about myself have been my teacher for being open with the class, and the students by discussing their own feelings.

The teacher expresses herself to us. We learn about her and she learns from us.

Counselors and teachers refer students to the Career Development Center or suggest that they take the Life Decision-Making course. The teachers and counselors are generally confident that positive outcomes will result when they refer students to the Center. One teacher not directly engaged in the program recalled an incident about a year ago in which a noncollege-bound student was concerned about what he would be doing after high school. The teacher referred him to the Center where the student became exposed to the Regional Occupations Program (ROP). He was able to take a course in masonry and learned a trade. The realization that he had an employable skill caused him to feel a real sense of self-accomplishment and self-respect.

Community Involvement

Community representatives initially participated in the program at Troy. The Project Director wanted the community to be a source of funds and sought commitments of time and participation in the program. News of the Center was spread through newspapers and the PTA newsletter. A serious effort was made to familiarize people in the community with the Center and

encourage their use of it, but little success has been achieved in this regard. The program continues to be financed by local taxes.

There are a number of links between the Center and the community in the existing programs and activities; for example:

1. The North Orange County Regional Occupations Program (ROP) which gives occupational training classes to students of all ages in a variety of fields. Each student's talent is identified and developed through involvement in learning activities that correspond to employer manpower needs. Students engage in practical experiences beginning with the learning needed for minimum or entry-level jobs and progressing through higher job levels, depending on the ability of each student and the opportunities available. Students may receive credit but are not paid.
2. Operation Bridge, which is a project coordinated with the community colleges through which juniors and seniors in high school receive credit for occupational training through classes they attend at the junior colleges.
3. Work Experience Programs, which include four varieties of approach:
 - a. Exploratory--includes students who indicate a preference or interest in a particular career in a setting where they can closely observe the work. They receive school credit, but are not paid. About thirty students per year choose this alternative. Steve's comments on this aspect of the program were positive: "My goal in the program was to see and learn about different fields in the medical profession. Exploratory Work Experience helped me confirm my decision."
 - b. Vocational--places students who have taken a vocational course on an appropriate job to learn additional skills. The student gets school credit and is paid for his time on the job. Approximately ten students per year participate.
 - c. Cooperative--includes students in a work setting concurrently with a vocational class related to the work. About five students are participating.
 - d. General--provides students with jobs not related to a specific career field, simply to supply work experience. Students receive school credit or pay or both for the work. About 100 students per year participate in this way.
4. Personnel interviews--Personnel representatives from local businesses come to the Center to stage simulated interviews with students.
5. The Guest Speakers Program.

Broad Impact and Evaluation

The Career Development Center and related programs do not employ counselors. The counselors' role in the school has changed so that they do not pretend to give vocational guidance to students when they lack the necessary time and expertise. Vocational guidance takes place in the Center and through the Life Decision-Making course. As a result of the project, the counselor can spend more time with individual problems in counseling students rather than guiding them into occupations or placing them in specific jobs. Before the Center evolved, parents or students wanting information on careers or job demands could only call on library resources such as The Occupational Outlook Handbook. Students can now do more than merely going to the library; they are able to explore career-related areas in depth and to take field trips to job settings for which they have expressed interest. They can even gain work experience and school credit at the same time through programs at the Center.

The program at Troy High School is now in its second year of operation. This year two other high schools in the district have started career centers, but no related courses are being offered. Troy's unique feature is the course.

No formal evaluation of the project at Troy has taken place. The only assessment of students' needs has been through the Priority Counseling Survey conducted annually in Orange County. The results have indicated some improvement in students' knowledge of directions they want their lives to take, but no precise data are available.

To date the only real indication of the project's success has been the enthusiasm expressed by teachers, counselors, and students in the school. Judy's comments represent how many students view the program: "The program gives students a wider view of life, of different occupations." The Life Decision-Making course is the most popular elective on campus. Many students want to repeat the course and do.

Students also participate in the course evaluation process. At the end of each two-week LAP period, they are asked to write down their reactions to it, how it compares with other LAPs, how it could be improved, or whether it should be discontinued. If comments on the LAPs indicate that it is not meeting student needs, the LAP is dropped. New ones are developed based on what students feel would be of interest and value. By participating in this way, students are involved in the planning process.

There are no plans for major changes in the program. Troy High School is moving toward the use of role differentiation in its staffing pattern. The staff believes that this will bring the course and Center closer to the Counseling Department and will therefore result in more coordination of activities and increased communication between the two. The newness of the program makes the defining of desired changes somewhat problematic, but hopes exist for a larger facility, more funds, more community involvement, smaller class size, and availability of the course to more students.

Conclusions

The Career Center and the related Life Decision-Making course at Troy High School appear to be extremely successful. There are few empirical data to substantiate this view, but many casual, subjective data are available. The Priority Needs Survey, which provided initial support for the program, has been readministered to students on a yearly basis. The Project Director indicated that although he did not know if results from this were statistically significant, they were positive enough to convince the staff at Troy of the program's worth. The Project Director also indicated that he relies more on informal observations of students than on formal evaluations. Using this criterion, the program is most successful in that it is the most popular elective on campus. The ten students who were randomly selected to be interviewed all indicated that the part of the program in which they had participated had helped them. Six of the ten indicated it had helped them obtain information or make decisions related to careers; four students reported that they had been helped to understand themselves and their personal characteristics. The type of effective critical incidents that were reported by the interviewed students, teachers, and counselors related about 40% of the time to changes in self-concept and about 60% to obtaining jobs and making career decisions.

None of the students was able to describe ineffective critical incidents, and the teachers and counselors interviewed indicated that while there may be an occasional student who is unaffected by the program there have been no known instances of negative results.

Another subjective measure of the success of the program is the enthusiasm reflected by the school staff for the program. The Project and

Center Directors believe that if a program is not successful, it will die from lack of support; however, considerable support is present at Troy.

The real strength of the program at Troy and a primary reason for selecting it for a site visitation is the instructional course taught at the Center. Many high schools make available space and educational and vocational material, unfortunately, in most instances such centers are not used effectively. When a course is taught in conjunction with the center, students taking the course are actively engaged in center activities. This creates a direct link between the center and the school curriculum, stimulates use of the center, and results in a much fuller and more satisfactory program.

Transportability

The staff at Troy believe that their program is 90% to 100% transportable. All ten students interviewed believe that this program would help other students similar to them in their school. When asked to describe those students it would help especially, they described students who were uncertain about their future or who wanted to know more about themselves and the opportunities available to them.

The staff indicated that, to be successful, such a program is dependent on the creativity and enthusiasm of individuals engaged in its creation and implementation. One other factor that has helped the project has been the involvement of the school administrative staff in development of the program. This continues to be of assistance because the administration acts as a buffer between the program and the district administration. The positive outcomes of the program are furthered by this strong administrative support and the creative and responsive attitudes of the teachers and Center staff. These two factors are the main challenges that would be faced by anyone attempting to replicate this program.

PROGRAM OUTLINE

Goal: To help students think about themselves and the direction that their lives will take.

Students Served: All students at Troy High School may use the Career Development Center during school hours (approximately 2,000 student visits are recorded each quarter). Approximately 150 juniors and seniors take the Life Decision-Making course each semester and spend approximately five hours per week.

Project Staff:

The Project Director is an Assistant Principal in the school. Two teachers instruct the Life Decision-Making course. Career Development Center staff includes a Center Director, a Career Guidance Specialist, two paraprofessionals, and two student aides. All staff were already employed in the school before the project was initiated.

Funding Source:

Currently funded 100% by school funds. During development, \$10,000 was made available from district Vocational Education Act fund to furnish the Center with equipment and resource materials.

Materials, Facilities, and Support

The Center is a 1300 square foot multipurpose type classroom, housing a wide range of audio-visual equipment and resource materials. The Life Decision-Making course is held in the Center. All staff except for the Project Director work at the Center. Work Experience and Guest Speaker programs make use of community support.

Student Activities:

Students use the Career Development Center on a drop-in basis, usually during their free periods. The Life Decision-Making course is structured so that students make decisions from the beginning. The course is usually conducted in small group settings in which discussion is the main activity. Sometimes students choose to work individually or attend large group presentations of Guest Speakers.

Contact Person:

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2200 East Dorothy Lane
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References:

Teaching for Career Decision-Making by Joan Kosuth and Jerry Millenberger. Copies of this report are available from Diversified Counseling Services, 13461 Elizabeth Way, Tustin, California 92680.

"Troy High School Career Development Center" by Marilyn Slemons, Career Center Director. A summary report on Career Development Center facilities and activities.