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# INCORPORATING CAREER DEVELOPMENT IN COLLEGE INTRODUCTORY BIOLOGY PROMOTES CLINICAL EXPERIENCE IN THE HEALTH PROFESSIONS

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## **Incorporating Career Development in College Introductory Biology Promotes Clinical Experience in the Health Professions**

### **Synopsis:**

Early career development results in greater far transfer of learning. A five component careers module was implement in freshman biology resulting in students completing and using a resume to successfully apply for and obtain clinical experience in the health professions.

Research tracking the successful increase in career experiences, interviews and internships from integrating formative career pathway exercises into a freshman biology course will be summarized.

## **Incorporating Career Development in College Introductory Biology Promotes Clinical Experience in the Health Professions**

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### **Abstract:**

Successful college students use a range of strategies that result in their being able to transfer knowledge and skills from one context and apply it in another which is called far transfer. Research has shown that the deepest learning and most successful career outcomes occur when students make connections themselves to real world settings. In undergraduate training for the health professions, exposure to clinical settings early in a student's undergraduate career results in higher employment rates and continued career progression to graduate training. Forty-eight students enrolled in freshman biology engaged in a five-part interactive career module. Pre and post tests were administered to assess student engagement, learning and skill development. The career module included: 1) resume development with peer feedback, 2) a comparison of three career paths including salary, training requirements, benefits and career-life balance, 3) an informational interview with a professional in one of the careers researched, 4) creation of a networking opportunities resource list and 5) hands-on volunteer experience in a clinical setting. While 62% of students had spoken to a professional in a career they were interested in and 49% had compared different training options, only 25% had clinical volunteer experience, 20% had applied for an internship and only 17% had created a resume. After completing the career module, 98% had created a resume, interviewed a professional and compared training for three different career paths. In addition, 85% had applied for an internship and 78% had volunteered in a clinical setting. Students reported that having the module structure in class helped them understand and implement the steps needed in gaining experience in their chosen profession and fostered interest in learning.