Syllabus for SOS-1500

Self-Assessment and Career Exploration

Course Description

Self-Assessment and Career Exploration students will evaluate life and career challenges from an interdisciplinary academic vantage point and build practical skills to make informed choices about life and career planning. Students will discern where in their life they may assert more control after viewing common life- and career-planning challenges from the disciplines of sociology, psychology, and communications. This course utilizes the book *Time to Get Real: Turning Uncertainty into an Action Plan for Personal and Professional Success* by Alex J. Plinio and Melissa Smith. The authors of *Time to Get Real* offer a practical blueprint to allow readers to make intentional choices about their life and career planning in a way that leads to personal satisfaction and fulfillment. In this course, students will be exposed to the "Life and Career Planning Model" designed by Plinio and Smith. By the end of the course, students draft a plan that will guide decision making for their career.

Topics

- Exploring career development from multiple academic viewpoints including sociology, psychology, and communications
- Self-assessment of personal characteristics, relationships, and values
- Examining career factors such as strengths/development areas and organizational mission
- Constructing a financial plan
- Appraising current and future work positions
- Assessing benefits of engagement with different age groups and cultures
- Producing, sharing, and revising a life and career plan
- Articulating a life purpose and creating a realistic vision of the future

Copyright © 2026 by Thomas Edison State University. All rights reserved.

Course Objectives

After completing this course, you should be able to:

CO 1 Explore life and career challenges from several academic viewpoints, including sociology, psychology, and communications.

CO 2 Apply the Life and Career Planning Model to their own life and career.

CO 3 Perform self-assessment in areas such as self-knowledge, relationships, life balance, and strengths/weaknesses.

CO 4 Explore the links between the mission, values, and culture of workplaces and their own mission values, and culture.

CO 5 Examine their current and future work positions, informed by resources such as the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*.

CO 6 Discuss the workplace value of relating to different age groups and cultures.

CO 7 Produce an action plan for their career, obtain feedback, and revise according to feedback.

Study Materials

You will need the following materials to complete your coursework. Some course materials may be free, open source, or available from other providers. You can access free or open-source materials by clicking the links provided below or in the module details documents. Please visit the following website to purchase course materials: University's textbook supplier.

Required Textbook(s)

- Plinio, A. J., & Smith, M. A. (2019). *Time to get real! Turning uncertainty into an*

Copyright © 2026 by Thomas Edison State University. All rights reserved.

action plan for personal and professional success. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
ISBN-13: 978-1978804616

Journal Requirement

You are required to keep a journal that records your responses to the questions posed in the Plinio/Smith book, along with your insights.

- You may record answers and insights in a journal file on your computer.
- Alternatively, you may use the book itself to record your insights.
- You may decide to purchase and use a hard copy journal.

Other Resources

- Articles and other resources are linked within modules.
- You will watch an embedded video in Module 5; it is located in the **Media** area of the course site.
- You will complete two Readiness Time Capsules: one at the beginning of the course and one at the end of the course; they are located in the **Readiness Time Capsule** area of the course site.

Course Structure

Self-Assessment and Career Exploration is a 3-credit online course consisting of 11 modules and a final project. Activities in the course consist of discussion forums, written assignments, an ongoing action plan, and brief papers that allow you to analyze your career planning using academic resources. You will keep a personal journal in which you record your observations and answers to textbook questions. You will also construct a life and career plan and share it with a trusted person. A final project asks you to examine what you have learned.

Each module includes an overview, topics, learning objectives, study materials, and activities. Module titles are listed below.

Copyright © 2026 by Thomas Edison State University. All rights reserved.

- **Module 1: Assessing Your Life, Career, and Well-Being**
  Course objectives covered in this module: CO 1, CO 2, CO 3

- **Module 2: Exploring Interests, Joy, and Personal Values**
  Course objectives covered in this module: CO 1, CO 2, CO 3

- **Module 3: Relationships**
  Course objectives covered in this module: CO 1, CO 2, CO 3

- **Module 4: Life Purpose**
  Course objectives covered in this module: CO 2, CO 3

- **Module 5: Life Balance**
  Course objectives covered in this module: CO 1, CO 2, CO 3

- **Module 6: Personal Strengths and Development Areas**
  Course objectives covered in this module: CO 1, CO 2, CO 3, CO 5

- **Module 7: Organization Mission, Values, and Culture**
  Course objectives covered in this module: CO 1, CO 2, CO 4

- **Module 8: Your Financial Plan and Your Current and Future Positions**
  Course objectives covered in this module: CO 2, CO 3, CO 5

- **Module 9: Crossing Age Groups and Cultures**
  Course objectives covered in this module: CO 1, CO 2, CO 4, CO 6

- **Module 10: Personal Vision**
  Course objectives covered in this module: CO 2, CO 3

- **Module 11: Analysis and Learning: Creating a Plan**
  Course objectives covered in this module: CO 2, CO 3, CO 7

Assessment Methods

You are required to participate in the following for formal work in the course:

Copyright © 2026 by Thomas Edison State University. All rights reserved.

- Write online discussion forum posts
- Complete written assignments
- Complete brief papers
- Complete action plan assignments
- Complete a life and career plan
- Finish a final project

See below for details.

Consult the Course Calendar for due dates.

Promoting Originality

One or more of your course activities may utilize a tool designed to promote original work and evaluate your submissions for plagiarism. More information about this tool is available in this Plagiarism Detection Tool Google document.

Discussion Forums

You are required to complete **12** discussion forums. The discussion forums are on a variety of topics based on the course modules.

Written Assignments

You are required to complete **8** written assignments (1½ to 2 pages). The written assignments are on a variety of topics associated with the course modules.

Brief Papers

You are required to complete **3** brief papers; each one is approximately 2 to 3 pages in length. The brief papers allow you to analyze your career planning using academic resources.

Copyright © 2026 by Thomas Edison State University. All rights reserved.

Action Plan Assignments

You are required to complete **9** action plan assignments. In the action plan assignments you list actions you might take to reach your life and career goals. They are graded complete/incomplete.

Life and Career Plan

You are required to complete a life and career plan, which you will build throughout the course.

Your plan will be graded on a complete/incomplete basis. Your mentor will be looking primarily for evidence that you have taken the plan seriously and incorporated all elements.

Final Project

Your final project involves reflecting on all that you have accomplished in this course.

- You will share your life and career plan with a trusted person and compose a brief feedback report to convey to your mentor.
- Then you will write a 3- to 5-page paper that examines your plan and its development in light of the resources you have explored in the course.

The Final Project area of the course provides fuller detail.

Grading and Evaluation

Your grade in the course will be determined as follows:

- **12 online discussions** are worth **18% of your final grade.**

Copyright © 2026 by Thomas Edison State University. All rights reserved.

- **8 written assignments** are worth **24% of your final grade.**
- **3 brief papers** are worth **18% of your final grade.**
- The **final project** is worth **17% of your final grade.**
    - **Part 1: feedback report** is worth **2% of your final grade.**
    - **Part 2: final paper** is worth **15% of your final grade.**
- **Complete/incomplete graded assignments** are worth **23% of your final grade.**
    - **2 readiness time capsule assignments** (complete/incomplete) are worth **4% of your final grade.**
    - **9 action plan assignments** (complete/incomplete) are worth **9% of your final grade.**
    - A **life and career plan** (complete/incomplete) is worth **10% of your final grade.**

All activities will receive a numerical grade of 0–100. You will receive a score of 0 for any work not submitted. Your final grade in the course will be a letter grade. Letter grade equivalents for numerical grades are as follows:

- **A** is **93 to 100.**
- **A minus** is **90 to 92.**
- **B plus** is **88 to 89.**
- **B** is **83 to 87.**
- **B minus** is **80 to 82.**
- **C plus** is **78 to 79.**
- **C** is **73 to 77.**
- **C minus** is **70 to 72.**
- **D** is **60 to 69.**
- **F** is **any grade below a 60.**

To receive credit for the course, you must earn a letter grade of C or better (for an area of study course) or D or better (for a course not in your area of study), based on the weighted average of all assigned course work (e.g., exams, assignments, discussion postings).

Copyright © 2026 by Thomas Edison State University. All rights reserved.

Strategies for Success

First Steps to Success

To succeed in this course, take the following first steps:

- Read carefully the entire syllabus, making sure that all aspects of the course are clear to you and that you have all the materials required for the course.

- Take time to read the entire Student Handbook. The Handbook answers many questions about how to proceed through the course, how to schedule exams, and how to get the most from your educational experience at Thomas Edison State University.

- Arrange to take your examination(s) by following the instructions in this Syllabus and the Student Handbook.

- Familiarize yourself with the learning management systems environment—how to navigate it and what the various course areas contain. If you know what to expect as you navigate the course, you can better pace yourself and complete the work on time.

- If you are not familiar with web-based learning, be sure to review the processes for posting responses online and submitting assignments before class begins.

Study Tips

Consider the following study tips for success:

- To stay on track throughout the course, begin each week by consulting the Course Calendar. The Course Calendar provides an overview of the course and indicates due dates for submitting assignments, posting discussions, and submitting the final project.

- Check Announcements regularly for new course information.

Copyright © 2026 by Thomas Edison State University. All rights reserved.

Using AI Ethically: A Guide for TESU Students

TESU's Academic Code of Conduct permits student AI use in support of their writing and research process—not as a replacement for original writing.

Document AI use with an acknowledgment statement at the end of each assignment, noting the tools and prompts used. Cite any AI-generated content on the References page.

Please review Using AI Ethically: A Guide for TESU Students for more detailed information.

Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Thomas Edison State University recognizes, values, and relies upon the diversity of our community. We strive to provide equitable, inclusive learning experiences that embrace our students' backgrounds, identities, experiences, abilities, and expertise.

Accessibility and Accomodations

Thomas Edison State University adheres to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA, 1990 and ADAAA, 2008) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) oversees requests for academic accommodations related to disabilities, including:

- A student who is pregnant, postpartum, or parenting a newborn who is not the birth parent [as covered under NJSA18A].

Copyright © 2026 by Thomas Edison State University. All rights reserved.

- Students requesting academic accommodation for a short-term or temporary illness.
- TESU students requesting academic accommodation for an injury.

Information can be found on the Office of Student Accessibility Services webpage.

Questions can be sent to ADA@tesu.edu.

Academic Policies

Familiarize yourself with all administrative and academic policies, including those related to the following list, to ensure success in all your academic endeavors and coursework at Thomas Edison State University:

- Academic integrity
- Course late submissions
- Extensions for the course
- Grading policies

For more, see:

- University-wide policies
- Undergraduate academic policies
- Undergraduate course policies
- Graduate academic policies
- Graduate course policies
- Nursing student policies
- Nursing graduate student policies
- International student policies
- Academic code of conduct

Copyright © 2026 by Thomas Edison State University. All rights reserved.