

**WOST 295C**

**KEEP THIS FOR FUTURE REFERENCE**

**CAREER AND LIFE CHOICES FOR WOMEN**

**Karen Lederer**

FALL 2006 Monday 2:30-4:10 2 Credits Mandatory PASS/FAIL

Office location: 208 Bartlett Hall, University of Massachusetts Amherst. I'm in the office most of each day, call for an appointment, 545-1922, or email me at lederer@WOST.umass.edu. Don't hesitate to contact me if you have a concern.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

---

*This is a challenging class, while non-traditional academically. The class requires commitment, thought, and **mandatory attendance**. If you can't give quality time and mental energy this semester, please don't enroll.* This course will give you the chance to do the things you know you need to do as a senior: write resumes, create a budget, and investigate career options. You will clarify your values and goals, and through that process, prioritize what is most important to you. The class is particularly focused toward career questions for Women's Studies students: what are the options if you want to help the world and have a reasonable life besides? The first part of the semester is self awareness, and the second part of the semester focuses on workforce information and practical job search skills.

**REQUIREMENTS DO NOT EMAIL ASSIGNMENTS**

---

1. Job Notebook/Journal - Look through the want ads at least once a week and clip out or print jobs in which you have some interest. Be sure to vary the newspapers you look in—choose large city papers like the Sunday Boston Globe and Sunday New York Times, the Washington Post, and large on-line bulletin boards, (idealist.com, wetfeet.com, monster.com are a start) and ads in professional journals for the fields that interest you. Keep a job notebook which contains these clippings and notes on what is specifically interesting about some jobs, what is challenging about them, things you don't like about them, further training necessary for you to do the jobs, and any other thoughts or feelings you have about them. Any other information you gather about jobs from people you meet or research you do ([www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov) has great information, including the occupational outlook handbook with up to date info on careers) can be kept in this notebook. Please bring your notebook to class regularly as periodically we will take a few minutes of class for people to share what they have gathered. **The first set of ads and comments is due at the 2<sup>nd</sup> class and ads may be collected 1-2 times after that.**
2. Budget - A budget form (supplied in class) must be completed and turned in. This budget is the projected realistic budget for the lifestyle you hope to have once you finish your education, and are in a job and location you want.

**Due Oct. 16.**

3. Information Gathering Interviews - Each student must conduct at least two interviews with individuals (preferably women) in careers she has chosen to explore. The purpose of these interviews is to gather information about what it is actually like (good and bad) to work in such positions, skills needed, career paths in the field, etc.

Written Assignment - A 2-3 page paper for each interview discussing the implications for you of the information gathered in the interview for a possible career in this area. The paper is not a transcript of the interview—it is your reaction to what you learned. Information learned in the interview should be related to what you learned in the exercises. **1st interview paper due Oct. 30. 2nd interview due by Nov. 27 at the latest.**

4. Resume and Cover Letter - Using information about yourself gathered during the self awareness section of the class and the material from the class on resumes, create a resume for a position selected from your job notebook or for a current position you are interested in. Write a cover letter as part of your application for that position. Turn in the ad with resume and cover letter plus 2 additional copies of each. **Due on Nov. 6 to receive feedback from others. Classroom feedback due Nov. 13. Final copy to be turned in Nov. 20 in class.**
5. Integrative Paper - Throughout the course you will be collecting information about yourself in relation to work and life preferences and career/job opportunities which match your needs. This paper is a discussion of what you have learned about your values, politics, skills, work environment preferences, life style, career, etc. Synthesize the insights gained from the exercises, readings, assignments, and group work. What is most important to you? Where are you willing to compromise? What is next? Include an action plan in which you discuss the concrete steps you will take to pursue the career you have chosen, or to further clarify your choice. Length - 3-7 pages. **Paper due at last class or to my office Dec. 18 noon.**

Optional Additional Assignments: This course can be customized to your needs. If you would like to submit graduate school application materials, a networking journal, a resume/cover letter for an actual position, or business plan, please see Karen.

## EVALUATION

---

Successful completion of this course depends on class participation and written work. It is essential that you complete the required exercises when they are due as we will be processing them in class. You are expected to be a productive member of your small group, giving careful feedback to other members of the class.

**To pass the course you must turn in all the assignments in hard copy and attend class. *Plagiarism will not be tolerated.***

ATTENDANCE AT EACH CLASS IS **MANDATORY**---MORE THAN 3 ABSENCES RESULTS IN FAILING GRADE. ***CONTINUAL TARDINESS WILL BE COUNTED IN THE ABSENCE CALCULATION. TAKE NOTE OF THIS.***

## REQUIRED TEXTS

---

Worksheets and handouts available in class.

Boldt, Laurence, Zen and the Art of Making a Living. Arkana, Penguin Books, New York, NY, 1999. The 1999 edition has internet information. If you get an earlier edition see me.

*This book is available at Food for Thought Books, 106 N. Pleasant St., Amherst.*

*If purchasing this book is a financial hardship, see me. I have some copies available.*

\*Michelson, Maureen, R. Women and Work: Photographs and Personal Writings New Sage Press, Pasadena, CA 1986 Women and Work, In Their Own Words, 2nd edition, same author and publisher, 1994. *\*Read this book on reserve in the library.*

**Career Services** at the University of Massachusetts Amherst has a website where you can search for jobs and find out about their other services: [www.umass.edu/careers](http://www.umass.edu/careers). This site links to other career resources.

### **Mark your calendar: Graduate & Professional Schools Information Day**

October 25, 2006 (10:00AM - 3:00PM)

Student Union Ballroom,

If you're thinking of going to Graduate School now, next year, or even several years from now, you should plan to attend this event.

Take this opportunity to meet one-on-one with representatives from over 125 graduate, medical, dental, law, social work, theology, international relations, education, library science programs and a range of other post-baccalaureate options from across the US and abroad. *from [www.umass.edu/careers](http://www.umass.edu/careers)*

The University Library also has great resources on careers and organizations. Be sure to include the library in your career investigation.

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

Assignments and readings are due on the day they are listed. There will be additional handouts, given out throughout the semester. Bring your worksheets to every class.

---

Sept. 11 **Class #1 Introductions** *Why Career/Life Planning*

Sept. 18 **Class #2 SELF AWARENESS #1** *Small groups begin.*

Reading due: Zen, Preface xii-xx, xxxiv, *Doing the Work You Love* xxxvi-li p. 215-228.

**DON'T DO THE EXERCISES IN ZEN.** Read these to whet your appetite for the more simplified exercises in the handouts.

Exercises due from the handouts: Interests; Inherently Special, page 1-2.

Turn in at least **2 job ads and comments**, one for a job for which you are presently qualified and another for a job for which you would like to be qualified for in five years. This is the first entry in your notebook.

Sept. 25 **Class #3 SELF AWARENESS #2**

Exercises due from handouts: Autobiography of Achievements; Skills Inventory; Personal Qualities, Work Experience pages 3-10.

Reading: Zen pages 164-172, 310-316. **DON'T DO THE EXERCISES IN THE BOOK.**

***There is no class on October 2 because of Yom Kippur.***

**Oct. 11 Class is on Wednesday. Monday Oct. 9 is a holiday**

**Class #4 SELF AWARENESS #3**

Exercises due from handouts: Work Values/Life Values; Job Chart; Wants/Don't Wants pages 12-14.

Read Zen pages 147-169, 173-178, 190-214. Four or more selections of your choice from Women and Work on reserve.

**DON'T DO THE EXERCISES IN ZEN.**

Oct. 16 **Class #5 SELF AWARENESS #4**

*Women/Money/Power.*

Handouts.

**BUDGET IS DUE**

Check out websites for amortization calculators, salary information and cost of living information.

Oct. 23 **Class #6 SELF AWARENESS #5**

*Focusing in on Career Choice*

Read Zen pages 280-286, 317-325.

(last of self awareness section)

Also read: Zen pages 287-298 on  
Informational Interviewing/researching careers.

Bring all your completed exercises and index cards to class.

Oct. 30 **Class #7**

*Resume Writing and Cover Letter Workshop*

Reading: Zen p. 429-474. Handouts.

**FIRST INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW DUE**

***Graduate School and Professional School day***

***Student Union Ballroom***

***October 25, 2006***

Nov. 6 **Class #8** Interviewing skills

**AD, LETTER, RESUME, AND 2 copies of each due for in class feedback.**

Nov. 13 **Class #9**

*Women in the Workforce, Affirmative Action Issues, Sexual Harassment, Background Checks.*

Read statistical information on working women in the handouts, and information on racism in workforce, affirmative action, and sexual harassment.

Zen on networking, pages 476-486.

**Bring feedback on classmate's resume/cover letters.**

Nov. 20 **Class #10**

*Campus Career Resources. Work and Family. Handouts.*

**Guest speakers: Caroline Gould,  
Assistant Director for Career Planning, Career Services  
Beth Lang, Reference librarian, W.E.B. Du Bois Library**

**FINAL COPY AD, RESUME AND LETTER DUE IN CLASS.**

Nov. 27 **Class #11** *Assertiveness Training, Stress Management*

Reading: Zen pages, 244-247, 326-345

**SECOND INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW PAPER DUE**

Dec. 4 **Class #12** *Graduate School; Goal Setting/Action Planning*

Reading Zen pages 528-532; 534; 566-576. Also read pages 348-428 as appropriate to your interests.

Future planning Zen xxiv-xxxiii.

Dec. 11 **Class #13** *Wrap Up and Evaluation*

**INTEGRATIVE PAPER DUE TODAY OR BY DEC 18 AT  
NOON TO MY OFFICE.**