

Career Clusters

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As long as you're in school, why not steer yourself in the right direction and start charting the appropriate course load toward the career of your dreams? The non-profit educational group Advance CTE (Career Technical Education) has created Career Clusters, a guide for students who have an idea about where they're going. This information can steer you toward a specific career and help you develop a checklist of essential knowledge and skills for various disciplines.

The Career Clusters are divided into 16 categories, which represent the major sectors of the job market. Each month, we've been taking a close look at one of these categories. This month, we'll break down the Health Science cluster.

If you're a student who dreams of becoming a doctor, developing a new medicine to treat cancer, or designing state-of-the-art medical facilities, then you're destined for a career in Health Science.

This pathway will require you to meet high academic standards and to engage in many hours of study. If you have the determination to succeed in this field, you're likely to receive an above-average salary as well as the satisfaction of helping people improve their health and overcome injury or disease.

Careers in health science require vari-

ous levels of specialized study after high school. If you aspire to become a doctor, surgeon, or specialist, years of medical school and advanced degrees await. But there are many other exciting jobs in this field that require focused, specialized training without baccalaureate degrees. Some of these jobs include registered nurses, lab technicians, EMT/paramedics, dental assistants, and health data analysts.

If you're interested in health and medicine, chances are you're proficient in science and math classes. Prepare to gather a broader knowledge of those subjects as well as technical skills that go with it. To excel in this field, you'll also need to develop strong communication skills, a foundation of leadership and teamwork, a sense of ethical responsibility, and the ability to think critically and solve problems.

Within the Health Science cluster, there are five specialized career pathways, which can guide you to a specific area of interest.

Therapeutic Services

If you choose this pathway, you'll work directly with patients and may provide care, treatment, counseling, and health education information. This is the pathway to becoming a doctor, nurse, surgeon, dentist, and therapist, as well as

a host of specialty areas, from acupuncture to veterinary medicine.

Diagnostic Services

Before treatment comes diagnosis, and if you choose this pathway, you'll administer tests and evaluations that aid in the detection, diagnosis, and treatment of diseases, injuries or other physical conditions. Testing and analysis are performed at various levels, from laboratories to computers to strategy sessions. Careers include blood bank specialists, geneticists, mammographers, optometrists, pathologists, radiologists, and sonographers.

Health Informatics

There's more to health than medicine. This pathway includes administrators who manage health care agencies as well as those responsible for patient data and information, financial information, and computer applications related to health care processes and procedures. Careers include admitting clerks, data managers, health information coders, medical billers, public health educators, and researchers.

Support Services

Jobs in this pathway help provide and maintain a therapeutic environment for healthcare. From the maintenance engi-

neers and food service administrators in a hospital, to equipment and transport technicians to orderlies and pharmacy aides, these careers provide vital support in a complex web of health services.

Biotechnology Research and Development

Follow this pathway if you want to study diseases or new treatments, invent medical devices used to directly assist patients, or to improve the accuracy of diagnostic tests. Careers include biochemists, clinical trial researchers, crime scene investigators, lab assistants, molecular biologists, pharmaceutical scientists, and toxicologists.

On the Career Technical Education (CTE) website — www.careertech.org — you'll find useful resources including a description of all 16 Career Clusters, a list of credentials required for each Career Cluster, and a Student Interest Survey that uses your responses to help guide you to your top three Career Clusters of interest.



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