



Vanier Catholic Secondary

## Career Life Connections

Semester 1, 2019-2020, Rotation #3

Mr. Sikkes' module

Education researchers July Halbert and Linda Kaser have described a successful graduate as one who crosses the stage with ***purpose, options, and dignity***.<sup>1</sup> Vanier's three CLC modules are roughly organized to address these three themes:

1. Ms. Giczi Purpose: Personal Career-life development
2. Ms. Brogdon Options: Career-life planning
3. Mr. Sikkes Dignity: Connections with community

***For the second group, this module will start on November 18 and end on December 18.***

A question that is part of the human condition is "How can I best ensure that I will be happy and satisfied with my future?" Instead, I would like you to pose to yourself the following question: "*How can I best ensure that I will live my life with the greatest sense of dignity?*"

Dignity is commonly defined as a noun that means a sense of self-respect or a sense of pride in one's self. Dignity can be judged by both yourself and by others who perceive you (i.e. Other members of the community). A major theme of this module is assessing both of these perspectives in a variety of contexts.

My module is intended to address the following ***curricular competencies***:

*Students are expected to be able to do the following:*

- Recognize personal worldviews and perspectives, and consider their influence on values, actions, and preferred futures
- Collaborate with a mentor to inform career-life development and exploration
- Engage with personal, education, and employment networks to cultivate post-graduation resources and social capital
- Identify and apply preferred approaches to learning for ongoing career-life development and self-advocacy
- Engage in, reflect on, and evaluate career-life exploration

My module is intended to address the following ***content***:

*Students are expected to be able to do the following:*

- factors that shape personal identity and inform career-life choices
- reflection strategies
- social capital and transferrable skills, including intercultural, leadership, and collaboration skills
- self-assessment to achieve goals that advance preferred career-life futures
- diverse post-graduation possibilities, including personal, educational, and work options

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<sup>1</sup> Halbert, J. & Kaser, L. (2013). *Spirals of Inquiry for Equity and Quality*. Vancouver, BC: BCPVPA Press.

## Topics:

The specific topics that I wish to explore with you all are the following:

1. Worldview – what are the “lenses” that you see the world through and that guide the opinions and decisions that you make?
2. Personal values – what are the core values that you have as a human being that should underpin all the decisions you make?
3. Reciprocity – who are the people that have helped you and who will you help, in turn?
4. Social Capital – how do the relationships that you form with others help make our world work better?
5. Personal/Public Profile – how are you perceived by yourself and others and what is the appearance that you *wish* to make in the world?
6. Fully Informed Conscience – how do you know whether you are ready to make the right decisions for yourselves and those whom you love?

## Class format:

This class will be run in a format generally referred to as a “seminar”. One definition of seminar is “a group of advanced students studying under a teacher with each doing original research and all exchanging results through reports and discussions”.<sup>2</sup>

This definition is appropriate as Grade 12 students should consider themselves to be “advanced” and the “original research” will be the reflection and exploration that students do about themselves.

A core component of a seminar is the need to share one’s “research”. Regular attendance and the willingness to share one’s thinking and ideas within small groups or with the whole class will be required to make this format successful. It is my hope that each of you will have a meaningful conversation with each other member of this class before the module is over.

My job is to argue with you all and I invite you to argue with me! In order to provoke and irritate you into expanding your thinking to include other perspectives, I will often take the opposite position of any idea introduced whether I actually believe it myself or not. This is not intended to dismiss or belittle what you are sharing, but to test it and see whether it is defensible. Please don’t take it personally – it’s not.

At the end of each class, a topic, dilemma, or question of the day will be introduced (that also might include a short reading). This will be the topic of the following class. Students who are absent but not excused will be required to submit a brief written submission of their thoughts about the topic, dilemma, or question of the day upon their return.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/seminar>

If this format is successful, there will be little need for regular written assignments. However, if students would rather do more written work, please let me know and I will rearrange my teaching/assessment plans.

**Assessment and Evaluation:**

Assignments for this module will be minimal if the seminar format is successful. My primary goals are for students to attend classes, think, reflect, and share their thinking and reflection.

The 16% allotted to this module will be divided into four assignments – three conversations with significant adults in your life and a final written assignment.

|                                 |            |
|---------------------------------|------------|
| Conversation 1                  | 2%         |
| Conversation 2                  | 2%         |
| Conversation 3                  | 2%         |
| <u>Final Written Assignment</u> | <u>10%</u> |
| TOTAL                           | 16%        |

**Assignment details:**

*Conversations*

Students will conduct three separate conversations with three different significant adults in their life. Significant adults may include (but are not limited to) parents, guardians, older siblings, extended family members (e.g. grandparents, aunts, cousins, etc.), family friends, teachers, employers, co-workers, or any other person whose opinions you are open to hearing.

The conversations will be designed help students actively listen to their conversant partner about a “big question” related to their career-life development (see Appendix A for a list of possible questions). Your conversation partner may appreciate having the question shared ahead of time to allow for their own thought and reflection before speaking to you.

Conversations need not last more than five minutes but could certainly go longer. The conversation should be documented in some manner (audio, video, or written notes) and submitted for tracking purposes.

In addition, each student is expected to briefly report on the substance of each conversation to the class. *Care should be taken to respect the privacy of the conversant partner* – we don’t need to know any identifying details about them. I am more interested in knowing what you discussed and anything interesting or relevant that you learned while speaking to them.

***These conversations should have all happened and been reported to the class by December 17.***

Grading scheme:

0% - no conversation happened, or it was not documented in any way.

1% - one or more of the conditions required for 2% is missing

2% - conversation is:

- With someone who was not conversed with before;
- A significant length – at least five minutes;
- Focused on the question posed;
- Focused on them, not you;
- Documented in some way to capture at least the main ideas;
- Shared (respecting the conversant partner's privacy) with the class; and
- Reflected upon to reveal any significance to your own life

### *Final Written Assignment*

There are scenes in many movies or books where someone is thought to be dead and that person is able to witness how others judge his or her life. Sometimes the dead-but-not-really-dead person is touched by the positive effect they had on others without knowing it and other times they are shocked at how poorly they are thought of by the people around them.

The purpose of the final written assignment for this module is to write a summary of how you hope your dignified life will be described by others, with specific focus on the topics and themes explored in this module. You can choose two ways to present your summary:

1. (Glass half-empty) Write your own obituary that would be printed in the newspaper after you die.
2. (Glass half-full) Write a tribute that would be shared as you receive your "Lifetime Achievement Award"

Each choice will involve submitting a written product that is 500-750 words in length (roughly two to three pages, double spaced with 12-point font). ***The due date for this assignment to allow for re-assessment is December 10.*** Submissions after this date will be graded but will not allow for re-assessment.

The marking guide for this assignment will be developed together in class.

### **Assignment submission:**

Students will submit their work and receive feedback using paper. Assignments can be emailed to [ryan.sikkes@yesnet.yk.ca](mailto:ryan.sikkes@yesnet.yk.ca)

## **Appendix A – Possible Conversation Questions (you are not limited to using only these)**

### Fully Informed Conscience

- What was a tough dilemma that presented itself in your life and how did you work your way through coming to a good solution?
- How do you make sure you know all sides of an issue before coming to judgement?
- How do you deal with perspectives and opinions that differ from those that you subscribe to?
- Have you ever had to choose to do something because you felt it was the right thing to do even though it might be an unpopular decision with others?
- Have you ever regretted a decision that you made because it did not really represent your personal values or beliefs?

### Worldview

- What are the “lenses” that you see the world through? Have they changed over time? How so?
- How did shifts in societal norms, such as family roles and structures, living arrangements (e.g., with immediate or multi-generational family/families, on-reserve or off-reserve, alone, with friends, with partner), expectations for self-regulation of work/life balance affect how you see the world?
- How has “place” (such as urban, suburban, small town, rural, remote) influenced how you see your place in the world?
- How have you respectfully navigated competing social, familial, and cultural expectations to pursue your preferred career-life pathways?

### Personal Values

- What is your personal “mission statement” and how does it influence how you live your life?
- What personal tools and strategies helped you develop and commit to short-term goals and actions, while keeping you open to other possibilities?
- How did your values and passions inform career-life decision making?
- How did your values and goals guide you to find meaningful balance among multiple career-life roles?

### Reciprocity

- What role did mentors play in your career-life development and in advancing your career-life goals?
- Have you had the opportunity to serve as a mentor to someone else? How and why did you choose to do so?

- Have you ever felt that you needed to “pay it back” or “pay it forward” because of something that someone once did for you?

#### Social Capital

- What are the networks or relationships that you depend on to be or feel successful or included?
- How have you capitalized on your strengths and interests to help make meaningful contributions?
- In what ways have you collaborated with people from our personal and educational/workplace networks to explore and further meaningful career-life opportunities?
- In what ways have your passions led to service for our communities?

#### Personal/Public profile

- How do your communications and interactions represent who and how you want to be perceived in the world?
- How have you taken steps to manage how others perceive you and your values?
- Does your career require you to have a public profile – how is it different from your private life and how do you manage that?