Using Texas CARES Web-based Resources as an Online Classroom Instructional Tool

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Abstract: The presenter will describe the use of Texas CARES online resources to supplement instruction in online classes in the Master of Arts in Rehabilitation Counseling program at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. The Texas CARES resources have replaced the OSCAR (Occupational and Skill Computer-Assisted Researcher) system. Like OSCAR, Texas CARES is O*NET and Holland-code based, but it has applications that considerably expand the utility beyond that of the OSCAR system. The use of Texas CARES in teaching online classes in Vocational Assessment and in Career Counseling and Placement will be discussed and demonstrated.

Overview

The presenter uses Texas CARES online resources to supplement instruction in online classes in the Master of Arts in Rehabilitation Counseling program at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. The Texas CARES resources have replaced the OSCAR (Occupational and Skill Computer-Assisted Researcher) system. Like OSCAR, Texas CARES is O*NET and Holland-code based, but it has applications that considerably expand the utility beyond that of the OSCAR system. The use of Texas CARES in teaching online classes in Vocational Assessment and in Career Counseling and Placement will be discussed and demonstrated in the presentation.

The online version of Texas CARES (www.texascaresonline.com) is a product of the Texas Workforce Commission/Labor Market and Career Information (TWC/LMCI) and is modeled after the desktop application of the same name. Texas CARES has two major groupings – the World of Work and the World of Learning. In addition, the website has numerous job-related resource links and occupational information videos available.

Within the World of Work there are five button links to help the consumer assess his or her own interests and skills. They are: Self Assessment, Skills Transferability (Best Match), Exploring Work, Career Clusters, and Occupation Info. Within the World of Learning there are five button links to help the consumer explore educational options. They are: High Schools Education Plan, Programs of Study, Exploring Education, College Majors, and College Info. Each of these Worlds allow the consumer to explore the various sub-categories i-depth and at his or her own pace.

The Master of Arts in Rehabilitation Counseling (MRC) program at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR) is experienced in online education. The MRC program at UALR, begun in 2000, was the first completely online degree program in the state of Arkansas and is currently the largest MRC program in the world. Rehabilitation counselor educators, who teach online, have to be creative in developing ways to teach key vocational assessment, and career counseling and placement concepts without the opportunity for students to have hand-on laboratory experience. Texas CARES is a new resource that makes that task a little easier.