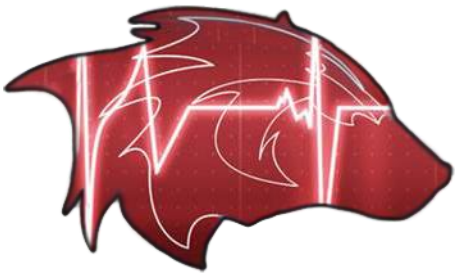
Western School of Technology and Environmental Science

Home of the wolverines

Health Science Technology Handbook & Prezi Usability Report



Thomas Aaron Ryefield

May 14, 2014

Table of Contents

List of Figures and Tables 2
Introduction 3
Methods & Research 3
Client Research 3
Guidance Counselor Research 4
Student Research 4
Usability Research 4
Results from Research 5
Client Results 5
Guidance Counselor Results 5
Student Results 5
Usability Results 6
Reviewing the Methods and Research 7
Handbook Review 7
Prezi Review 9
Conclusion 9
Appendices 11
A) References 11
B) Usability Surveys & Results 12
Participant #1 12
Participant #2 15
Participant #3 18
C) Interview Questions 21
D) Drafts 22

List of Figures and Tables

Figure 1. List of internship units in the HST program 5

Table 1. Post-test survey results on document usefulness and design 6
Table 2. Short-answer comments on design, navigation, and images 7

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to show research, review results, and discuss methods used in the Health Science Technology (HST) handbook and Prezi projects. I will start by discussing the research methods that were used for these projects. I will then detail the results of the research. Then I will explain why I used certain methods and conducted my specific research. I will conclude with a summary of my findings and thoughts.

The handbook was created with the following rhetorical situation in mind:

- Audience: (Primary) Baltimore County middle school guidance counselors
  (Secondary) Potential students and their parents
  (Gatekeepers) Bethany Birago & Dr. Elizabeth Angeli
- Subject: Western Tech's HST Program
- Purpose: To inform counselors about the HST program so that they may better discuss the program with students
- Context: A middle school guidance counselor's office

The Prezi was created with the following rhetorical situation in mind:

- Audience: (Primary) Potential students, their parents, and Baltimore County middle school guidance counselors
  (Gatekeepers) Bethany Birago & Dr. Elizabeth Angeli
- Subject: Western Tech's HST Program
- Purpose: To provide students with a more targeted information
- Context: A middle school guidance counselor's office, at a student's home
  Desktop, laptop, tablet, smartphone

Methods & Research

The handbook and Prezi were created with the overarching framework of user-centered design. Decisions (including language, paragraph length, picture choices, and content) were all made based on the needs of the primary audiences of each project.

Client Research

Research on the needs of my client, Bethany Birago, was conducted by interviewing Birago and by reading documents found on the Western Tech and Baltimore County Public Schools (BCPS) websites.

The first interview with Birago was performed over Skype. This interview was meant to learn the basics of the HST program along with some more specific information. The interview was also meant to make Birago's needs as the client clear so that I knew what to include in the handbook and Prezi.

I emailed Birago several times throughout the writing and planning processes to acquire additional information when needed. On April 9, 2014, I also spoke to her in person to clarify the way that internships work at HST.

Guidance Counselor Research

Research was conducted as a group. I worked alongside my classmates in Towson University's Professional Writing program to create a list of questions that we thought were most important to ask of guidance counselors.

Dr. Elizabeth Angeli then got in touch with Larry Zuckerman, a guidance counselor at Franklin Middle School. She conducted a phone interview with Zuckerman to find out how counselors currently discuss HST with students. Her questions were qualitative.

The class as a whole developed a series of questions to create a more quantitative survey that other counselors would fill out. Three counselors participated in the survey: Naomy Soto-Coleman; lnelson3@bcps.org; and Larry Zuckerman.

All other rhetorical decisions related to the guidance counselors were made by using the theoretical methodology of creating an imagined audience. I wrote a persona of an overworked guidance counselor and wrote my handbook according to that persona's needs and experiences.

Student Research

Research on students was conducted by interviewing current students at Western Tech. On April 9, 2014, I joined several classmates and Dr. Angeli on a trip to Western Tech to talk to HST juniors and seniors. I had personal interviews with five juniors: Peace Ani, Ruth Getachew, Danielle Macluka, Saba Qaiser, and Joy Roy.

I attempted to get more quantitative information out of the students by asking all of them the same questions (see Interview Questions in Appendix C for more info). Other information, however, was qualitative and personal to each student.

I chose to ask these questions to the students so that I knew what to put emphasis on when creating the Prezi, which would target students more so than counselors.

Usability Research

I conducted two tests of usability for the handbook and Prezi. The first test was conducted on April 30, 2014 with two participants, and the second was on May 3, 2014 with one participant.

The usability task protocols were meant to test the handbook and Prezi's designs and organization. The tasks asked participants to find certain pieces of information within each project. I recorded the participants times spent on each task, their navigation paths, and their spoken thoughts and criticisms throughout the test.

Demographic questionnaires and concluding surveys were used to measure participants' comfort levels with using these documents. The surveys then measured their approval of the documents' designs, organization, and usefulness. The demographic questionnaire and concluding survey evenly employed quantitative and qualitative research questions.

Results from Research

The results of my research methods made it very clear that students and counselors needed better starting places when doing their own research on the school. Information is scattered all around, with counselors getting info from BCPS and students getting info from Western Tech.

Client Results

The information from Birago, HST material, and BCPS material gave me the foundation I needed for both projects. For the handbook, guidance counselors would need to know information about the internships and curriculum. For the Prezi, students would need to know how to apply to the school.

Birago's interviews and email correspondence gave me the clearest explanation for how the internship programs work. She was able to describe the program in heavy detail. The most useful information I received was the list of "units" students are able to take during their internships (see Figure 1).

When I did this research, I took note of how many different documents and websites I had to visit in order to get my information. Some documents were cluttered and unreadable while others had little information. It took over ten different resources to get a grasp on how the HST program works and how students apply for it.

Guidance Counselor Results

Dr. Angeli's phone interview with Larry Zuckerman revealed that counselors often talk to students about magnet school programs one-on-one. Zuckerman also stated that he got his information about HST from the BCPS website.

Student Results

My interviews with the current HST juniors gave me good quantitative data on how students received their information about HST. Most of the students I spoke to, as well as the students that my fellow classmates spoke to, stated that they got their information about HST from representatives of Western Tech.

HST Internship units

- Inpatient Neurology Unit
- Inpatient Adult Surgery Unit
- Inpatient General Medical Unit
- Inpatient Physical Therapy
- Radiation Oncology
- GI Lab
- Neonatal Intensive Care Unit
- Mother-Baby Unit
- Pediatrics Unit
- Pediatric Emergency Department
- Child Psychiatry Unit
- Shock Trauma Post Anesthesia Care Unit
- MRI
- Inpatient Greenebaum Cancer Center
- VA Inpatient Pharmacy
- VA Outpatient Pharmacy
- VA Eye Clinic
- VA Prosthetics Clinic

Figure 1. List of internship units in the HST program

The majority of the students in HST did not get information from their guidance counselors. A few of my interviewees (no direct quotes available) stated that they didn't know who their middle school counselors were when they were applying. Two of my interviewees got most of their information from current students.

Another common theme I received from the interviews was the general excitement that students had for the internship program. All five of my interviewees stated that the biggest attraction of the HST program was the internship and the large variety of medical units that they would study.

Usability Results

The usability surveys revealed that the handbook and Prezi both had strong designs and organization, and that the images used for the Prezi were the weakest parts of the project. The results in Table 1 show that the handbook and Prezi were useful to the participants, and that the documents' designs are in need of changes. Since I used a rating scale of 1 to 5 (low to high), the overall thoughts of the participants were positive.

	Handbook usefulness	Handbook design	Prezi usefulness	Prezi design
Mean:	5	4.3	5	4.6
Median:	5	4	5	5
Mode:	5	4	5	5

Table 1. Post-test survey results on document usefulness and design

The demographic questionnaire, given to participants at the start of the test, provided me with a diverse list of user needs. When asked what the users wanted out of a visual presentation, they responded with the following:

- Clarity
- Readable font
- Not too wordy
- Clear instructions
- Visually entertaining
- Accurate information
- Stay on topic

This information makes it clear that users value clean, clear designs with plenty of white space and pleasing visuals. Only one of the three participants put value in the information itself, while the other two put value in design. Three of the seven user needs focused on clarity, and another three of seven user needs focused on the information design and overall layout of the visual presentation.

When participants were asked what they wanted from a handbook on the HST program, they responded with the following:

- Curriculum
- Application instructions
- How to get into the program
- What are its benefits/key features

The mode of this data is the application process for the HST program, with two different users wanting to know this information. Based on this data, including an application process somewhere within the project is required to meet the users' needs.

In the post-test survey, participants put a high value on clear information and easy navigation in their short-answer questions. Table 2 provides a categorized list of feedback from the post-test survey. Since navigation and clear design were brought up so frequently, this data shows that the participants' prime needs were met, excluding their need for relevant visuals.

Information Design	Navigation	Visual Design
Clear, simple design.	Good headings. Easy to navigate.	Pictures in the Prezi could be a little more relevant instead of generic
Very clear layout in handbook. Both were visually appealing.	I would fix the table of contents error that you pointed out.	Center images in the Prezi frames
Laid out logically.	I found information that I needed quickly.	
	Handbook, as PDF, could have a sidebar table of contents	

Table 2. Short-answer comments on design, navigation, and images

Reviewing the Methods and Research

In this section, I will explain my reasons for the major choices I made when designing the handbook and Prezi. My decisions were based around my research with Birago, the guidance counselors, and the HST students. Every decision was meant to create user-centered projects.

Handbook Review

The handbook was designed with the guidance counselors as my primary audience. From what I learned about Zuckerman and from class discussion about imagined

audiences, I knew that my audience's time was precious. My major decisions were impacted by counselors' busy schedules, while smaller decisions were decided purely by the principles of document and information design.

I kept the handbook as short as possible to accommodate for the busy schedules of guidance counselors. In *Technical Editing*, Rude and Eaton say that "Good editors envision the situation and the reader using the document" (21). I made the decision to keep the handbook short from what I knew from my research and from my imagined audience. Out of the ten pages in the document, only seven contain information for the counselors. The first two are the title page (purely aesthetic) and the table of contents, while the last page is meant to be printed off and given to students.

Individual paragraphs and sentences were kept as short as possible while still being detailed. Even though I listed information to create plenty of white space whenever possible, my pages still required pictures to appear less intimidating and more easily skimmed. I also used the Georgia font on size 12 because large fonts would be more pleasing and easier to read. I used the Verdana font for my headings since Verdana and Georgia were made to work together.

Since many counselors already have experience working with Western Tech, I didn't want to offend anyone with the information I presented. Rude and Eaton say, "…an inappropriate writer voice, or persona, can cause distracting noise in a document" (25). I purposefully chose a friendly tone of voice and used phrases such as "feel free to use this presentation" so that I didn't force any of this information onto my audience. I made sure that my purpose statement made it very clear that the handbook is meant to help the counselors, not the school. This decision was highly important to put readers in the right mind-frame and keep them calm in case they came across information that they already knew.

For my title page and pamphlet, I used the same tint of blue found in Western Tech's logo. This, along with the use of the wolverine mascot throughout the document, was meant to brand the document with the school, to make it look official and like it came from the school and not an outside source. I also created a custom border on the right side and top of eight pages to further establish the branding and to unify the document.

To create contrast, I used the red wolverine logo for HST whenever I started a new major section of the handbook. The eye would be drawn to the bright red color that contrasted with the blue. My choice to use red follows the best practices of document design discussed in Robin Williams' *The Non-Designer's Design Book*. In this book, Williams says, "If two items are not exactly the same, then make them different. Really different" (Williams 65). I used a heavier contrast with the pamphlet by including

several red wolverines and an entirely new layout so that counselors would see it and realize that something was different. I made the pamphlet stand out like this to avoid confusion and make it easy to identify.

Prezi Review

The Prezi presentation was designed with students and parents as my primary audience. My choices for the Prezi were based around being clean, easy to read, and focused mainly on the internship and the application process. The Prezi was also not meant to give every detail that a student would need to know. The Prezi's purpose is to give students an overview of the program and an idea of where to go for more information.

Paragraphs in the Prezi were kept as short as possible to keep the students' interest and to give them information in digestible chunks. I used lists whenever possible to make room for images and create plenty of comforting white space. I chose pictures of students so that they could be identifiable with my audience, and I chose ones that were welcoming and friendly.

The heart monitor design for the path and the background was meant to tie in with the program's logo and to create a visually appealing presentation that kids would enjoy. The transitions were kept short to avoid generating motion sickness in some viewers.

I put the information in a linear order in an attempt to create a story-like progression. The presentation starts with the background of the program, then moves on to the internship since my research showed that students found the internship to be the most exciting part of the program. From there, I covered other activities like clubs and athletics that kids might want to hear about before moving on to the application process.

Details such as transportation and the inner workings of the application process were put in the back to not bore students. Any student who got far enough in the Prezi to find those frames would have enough interest to then read that information. To include those frames earlier would turn off readers.

Conclusion

This usability report has detailed my research and methodologies for the Western Tech HST handbook and Prezi projects. Through my research, I discovered that the most important thing guidance counselors and students need is a solid starting point for their research. My handbook and Prezi can never answer all of the questions my audience might have, but so long as it answers the big questions (internship and application) and points them in the right direction for future research, it meets its purpose.

My research showed that getting a firm grasp of the HST program is difficult without consulting numerous sources. The handbook, as a genre, should cut down on the amount of searching that a person should have to do. My handbook and Prezi should make it easier for counselors and students to find information and to find sources.

Word Count: 2653
Heading Word Count: 34
Table Word Count: 115
Net Word Count: 2497

Appendices

A) References

Angeli, Dr. Elizabeth. Interview with Larry Zuckerman. March 24, 2014.
Ani, Peace. Personal interview. April 9, 2014.
Birago, Bethany. Email message. February 27, 2014.
Birago, Bethany. Group Skype interview. February 19, 2014.
Birago, Bethany. *Western Health Science Tech Program Info*. Maryland: Towson, 2013. PDF posted on PRWR 623 Spring 2014 Blackboard Site.
Getachew, Ruth. Personal interview. April 9, 2014
Health Science Technology. Maryland: Towson, 2013. http://www.edline.net/files/_gTHKi_/60276722c4bf338f3745a49013852ec4/Health_Science_Technology.pdf.
"Health Science Technology." *Western School of Technology and Environmental Science*. Accessed February 8, 2014. http://www.edline.net/pages/Western_School_of_Technology/Magnet_Programs/Health_Science_Technology.
Macluka, Danielle. Personal interview. April 9, 2014.
Qaiser, Saba. Personal interview. April 9, 2014.
Roy, Joy. Personal interview. April 9, 2014.
Rude, Carolyn and Angela Eaton. *Technical Editing*. 5th ed. Pearson Education, Inc., 2011. Print.
Williams, Robin. *The Non-Designer's Design Book*. 3rd ed. Berkley: Peachpit Press, 2008. Print.

B) Usability Surveys & Results

Participant #1
April 30, 2014

Demographic Survey

What is your date of birth? (Month – Day – Year): 6/14/90

Have you ever used Prezi before? Y / N
If yes, on a scale of 1 to 5 (with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest), how comfortable do you feel with using Prezi?
1 2 3 4 5

On a scale of 1 to 5 (with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest), how comfortable do you feel with finding information in a PDF file?
1 2 3 4 5

What features do you think are important in a visual presentation?
Clarity; readable font

Hypothetical: You have just been handed a reference handbook that gives you details on a magnet school and one of its major programs. What information would you most like to see in that handbook?
Curriculum; application instructions

Task-base Protocols - Handbook
Task 1:
What page has the printable pamphlet meant for students and parents?
Navigation path: ToC, info for students, pg 9, pg 10.
Spoken thoughts: "I see info for students. There it is."
Time: 30 seconds
Did the participant find the information correctly? Y / N

Task 2:
What is the purpose of this handbook?
Navigation path: ToC, Page 3.
Spoken thoughts: "I see a 'Purpose of this handbook' so I'll go there."
Time: 18 seconds
Did the participant answer the question correctly? Y / N

Task 3:

When did the Health Science Technology (HST) program stop offering Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) and Geriatric Nursing Assistant (GNA) certification?
Navigation path: ToC, pg 4
Spoken thoughts: "I think I'll find that in the mission."
Time: 22 seconds
Did the participant answer the question correctly? Y / N

Task-based Protocols - Prezi

Task 1:
How do students apply to the HST program?
Navigation path: Used the scroll bar to go directly to the image of the letter
Spoken thoughts: "Let's see…" No other spoken thoughts.
Time: 12 seconds
Did the participant find the information correctly? Y / N

Task 2:
Please name 3 of the internship units a student can study at HST.
Navigation path: Search for the picture on the internship slide
Spoken thoughts: "It was visually appealing, so I remember it."
Time: 17 seconds
Did the participant answer the question correctly? Y / N

Task 3:
Due to class sizes, not every student who passes the assessment test can be accepted to HST. How does the school's selection process work?
Navigation path: Skipped to the second half of the presentation. Read the headings and ultimately skipped to the image of the confused man.
Spoken thoughts: "I will scroll to the end. I remember the headings."
Time: 14 seconds
Did the participant answer the question correctly? Y / N

Task 4:
Please name 3 of the core classes in the HST program.
Navigation path: Went through linearly until she found a heading that caught her eye.
Spoken thoughts: No spoken thoughts. She was later asked to explain her process and she said that she had been reading all of the slide headings in her head.
Time: 18 seconds
Did the participant answer the question correctly? Y / N

After-test Survey and Questionnaire
Compared to other sources of information on HST, the handbook rates a: 1 2 3 4 5

The usefulness of the information on this handbook rates a: 1 2 3 4 5

The design and layout of the handbook rates a: 1 2 3 4 5

The usefulness of the information of the Prezi rates a: 1 2 3 4 5

The design and layout of the Prezi rates a: 1 2 3 4 5

What did you like about the handbook & Prezi?
Clear, simple design. Good headings. Easy to navigate.

What did you not like about the handbook & Prezi?
N/A

What suggestions do you have for improving the handbook & Prezi?
Center images in Prezi frames

Participant #2
April 30, 2014

Demographic Survey

What is your date of birth? (Month – Day – Year): 9/22/84

Have you ever used Prezi before? Y / N

If yes, on a scale of 1 to 5 (with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest), how comfortable do you feel with using Prezi?

1 2 3 4 5

On a scale of 1 to 5 (with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest), how comfortable do you feel with finding information in a PDF file?

1 2 3 4 5

What features do you think are important in a visual presentation?

Clear instructions; not too wordy; visually entertaining

Hypothetical: You have just been handed a reference handbook that gives you details on a magnet school and one of its major programs. What information would you most like to see in that handbook?

How to get into the program

Task-base Protocols - Handbook

Task 1:
What page has the printable pamphlet meant for students and parents?
Navigation path: ToC, pg 4, 3, 4, 5, Toc, pg 3, 9, 10
Spoken thoughts: Nothing specific. Mumbled
Time: 49 seconds
Did the participant find the information correctly? Y / N

Task 2:
What is the purpose of this handbook?
Navigation path: ToC, Page 3.
Spoken thoughts: "Well it's stated pretty clearly."
Time: 12 seconds
Did the participant answer the question correctly? Y / N

Task 3:
When did the Health Science Technology (HST) program stop offering Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) and Geriatric Nursing Assistant (GNA) certification?
Navigation path: ToC, pg 4
Spoken thoughts: "Right there."
Time: 5 seconds
Did the participant answer the question correctly? Y / N

Task-based Protocols - Prezi
Task 1:
How do students apply to the HST program?
Navigation path: Used scroll bar to scan linearly, reading each heading.
Spoken thoughts: "Right there in that question." Referring to the heading.
Time: 14 seconds
Did the participant find the information correctly? Y / N

Task 2:
Please name 3 of the internship units a student can study at HST.
Navigation path: Scanned whole presentation for a big list.
Spoken thoughts: Mumbled about looking for a big list.
Time: 10 seconds
Did the participant answer the question correctly? Y / N

Task 3:
Due to class sizes, not every student who passes the assessment test can be accepted to HST. How does the school's selection process work?
Navigation path: Used scroll bar to scan linearly, reading each heading.
Spoken thoughts: No spoken thoughts.
Time: 18 seconds
Did the participant answer the question correctly? Y / N

Task 4:
Please name 3 of the core classes in the HST program.
Navigation path: Used scroll bar to scan linearly, reading each heading.
Spoken thoughts: No spoken thoughts.
Time: 15 seconds
Did the participant answer the question correctly? Y / N

After-test Survey and Questionnaire

Compared to other sources of information on HST, the handbook rates a: 1 2 3 4 5

The usefulness of the information on this handbook rates a: 1 2 3 4 5

The design and layout of the handbook rates a: 1 2 3 4 5

The usefulness of the information of the Prezi rates a: 1 2 3 4 5

The design and layout of the Prezi rates a: 1 2 3 4 5

What did you like about the handbook & Prezi?
Very clear layout in handbook. Both were visually appealing.

What did you not like about the handbook & Prezi?
I can't really think of anything that I noticeably disliked while scrolling through.

What suggestions do you have for improving the handbook & Prezi?
I would fix the table of contents error that you pointed out.

Participant #3
May 3, 2014

Demographic Survey

What is your date of birth? (Month – Day – Year): 2/04/86

Have you ever used Prezi before? Y / N

If yes, on a scale of 1 to 5 (with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest), how comfortable do you feel with using Prezi?

1 2 3 4 5

On a scale of 1 to 5 (with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest), how comfortable do you feel with finding information in a PDF file?

1 2 3 4 5

What features do you think are important in a visual presentation?

Accurate information placed along with relevant examples. It's basically staying on topic.

Hypothetical: You have just been handed a reference handbook that gives you details on a magnet school and one of its major programs. What information would you most like to see in that handbook?

How the program starts/why. What are its benefits compared to other programs. Key features.

Task-base Protocols - Handbook

Task 1:
What page has the printable pamphlet meant for students and parents?
Navigation path: ToC, pg 10.
Spoken thoughts: "Does it have a table of contents on the side? Oh, it's on page 2. Printable pamphlet is on page 10."
Time: 38 seconds
Did the participant find the information correctly? Y / N

Task 2:
What is the purpose of this handbook?
Navigation path: Pg 1.
Spoken thoughts: Read the purpose subtitle out loud on the title page
Time: 5 seconds
Did the participant answer the question correctly? Y / N

Task 3:
When did the Health Science Technology (HST) program stop offering Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) and Geriatric Nursing Assistant (GNA) certification?
Navigation path: ToC, pg 4
Spoken thoughts: "I will read the table of contents out loud. I'm going to click the mission and hope that it's there."
Time: 40 seconds
Did the participant answer the question correctly? Y / N

Task-based Protocols - Prezi
Task 1:
How do students apply to the HST program?
Navigation path: Went to "need more info" and went backwards from there.
Spoken thoughts: "I believe that would be at the end."
Time: 24 seconds
Did the participant find the information correctly? Y / N

Task 2:
Please name 3 of the internship units a student can study at HST.
Navigation path: "How does the assessment work," forward 2 slides, overview, looked for lists, found clubs, went backwards."
Spoken thoughts: Read headings aloud
Time: 37 seconds
Did the participant answer the question correctly? Y / N

Task 3:
Due to class sizes, not every student who passes the assessment test can be accepted to HST. How does the school's selection process work?
Navigation path: Went back to "how assessment works" and went forward one slide.
Spoken thoughts: No spoken thoughts.
Time: 21 seconds
Did the participant answer the question correctly? Y / N

Task 4:
Please name 3 of the core classes in the HST program.
Navigation path: Searched for lists and found clubs, then went backwards to classes.
Spoken thoughts: Read headings aloud
Time: 12 seconds
Did the participant answer the question correctly? Y / N

After-test Survey and Questionnaire

Compared to other sources of information on HST, the handbook rates a: 1 2 3 4 5

The usefulness of the information on this handbook rates a: 1 2 3 4 5

The design and layout of the handbook rates a: 1 2 3 4 5

The usefulness of the information of the Prezi rates a: 1 2 3 4 5

The design and layout of the Prezi rates a: 1 2 3 4 5

What did you like about the handbook & Prezi?

Laid out logically. Looking through both – blind – I found the information that I needed quickly.

What did you not like about the handbook & Prezi?

Can't really think of much. The pics in the Prezi could be a little more relevant instead of generic pic.

What suggestions do you have for improving the handbook & Prezi?

Handbook, as PDF, could have a side-bar table of contents. Prezi was layed out well, but change images.

C) Interview Questions

The following questions are from Dr. Elizabeth Angeli's phone interview with Larry Zuckerman.

1. How do middle school guidance counselors present high school options to students?
    a. Follow-up 1. How do you decide on candidates?
    b. Follow-up 2. Where do you get info?
    c. Follow-up 3. How much time (do you have to spend) for each program?
2. Would you be interested in completing a 19-question survey about middle school guidance counselors' experiences with recruitment?
3. Do you know of any other counselors who would be interested in completing the survey?

The following questions are from my interviews with Peace Ani, Ruth Getachew, Danielle Macluka, Saba Qaiser, and Joy Roy:

1. What attracted you to the HST program the most?
2. Where did you get your information about HST?
3. Was there any information you would have liked to know when you were applying to the program?

D) Drafts

Original Handbook draft: April 9, 2014

Purpose of the Manual

The purpose of this manual is to provide you with easy-access reference material for the Health Science Technology (HST) program at the Western School of Technology and Environmental Science (Western Tech). This information will help to improve discussions with students interested in the HST program. The manual has been broken up into two main sections: Information for You; and Information for Students/Parents

Information for You

This section includes the following information about the HST program:

- The program's mission
- Curriculum
- Requirements for new students
- Internship opportunities
- Miscellaneous features

Information for Students/Parents

This section includes materials meant for students and parents interested in the program.

- A link to a Prezi presentation about the HST program
- A printable pamphlet about the HST program

Information for You

What is the program's mission?

The HST program's main mission is to prepare students for post-secondary education. The program does not cater to one particular type of medical profession. Classes and internships seek to open students up to a variety of potential careers, which include:

- Doctors
- Pharmacists
- Surgeons
- Nurses
- Certified Nursing Assistants (CNA)
- Geriatric Nursing Assistant (GNA)
- And many more

In 2006, the HST program stopped offering preparation courses for CNA and GNA certification. Its main focus remains on higher education. However, students interested in working straight out of high school are still welcome to apply.

What is the program's curriculum?

Math and science courses are the most important courses in the program's curriculum. Students will be expected to take the following amount of classes in the following subjects:

- 1 Math class per year
- 1 Science class per year
- 1 Required "completer" course that's heavily science-based per year
- 1 English class per year
- 1 Social Studies class per year
- 1 Foreign Language class per year (or an elective in grade 11)
- 1 General Education course per year

In grade 12, students are given 3 options for their last completer course.

- Paid/Unpaid internship
- Concurrent enrollment
- AP classes at Western Tech

For more information on the HST curriculum, download the Health Science Technology pdf (http://www.edline.net/files/_gTHKi_/60276722c4bf338f3745a49013852ec4/Health_Science_Technology.pdf).

What competencies are required of students?

There are no additional requirements of students for the HST program. Students are only required to score the usual 70% on the Baltimore County Public Schools' (BCPS) magnet program assessment (see the BCPS Middle School Application page (http://www.bcps.org/offices/omp/middle/apply_docs.asp) and the BCPS Scoring Guidelines page (http://www.bcps.org/offices/omp/middle/apply_docs.asp) for more information if necessary).

That being said, the HST program encourages that students have strong proficiencies in math and science. This is merely a preference to consider, as it will not affect the student's chance of getting accepted should they pass the assessment.

What internships are offered?

During grade 11, students visit the University of Maryland Medical Center to participate in internship "units." Each unit focuses on a particular aspect of the medical field. Students spend 5 weeks in each unit before rotating to the next one.

Students do not get to choose which specific units they take. Instead, at the end of grade 10, they tell their teacher what they think they may want to do for a living. The teacher then decides what 5 units best serve that career goal. Not every unit will precisely reflect the student's goal, as they are meant to expose students to a broad range of medical fields. During these internships, students will be given "buddies" (working professionals) to work with patients for real world experience.

In grade 12, students can choose to take a more specialized internship (either paid or unpaid). Often times they will work with the University of Maryland again, though they can also choose to work in a different location. These internships require a minimum of 10 hours of work per week.

What are the features of the program?

This section contains a list of miscellaneous features of the HST program. Refer to these features during conversations with students to inform them about the program or to answer questions they may have.

- **State-of-the-art Technology:** The medical equipment and technology used in the HST program is up-to-date with modern medical standards. Students will learn by using the tools used by real doctors.
- **Professional Lectures:** Several times throughout each year, working professionals visit HST students to lecture them and give them advice. The HST program has had strong relationships with working professionals for many years.
- **Graduate Lectures:** Graduates of the HST program are often invited back to talk to juniors. These graduate lectures give students good ideas of where they could go after graduating.
- **Future Prep:** Before graduation, students are instructed on how to write a resume and act professionally during an interview. They're given mock interviews and workshops to prepare them for college applications and future employment.

Need more info?

If you have any further questions about the HST program, feel free to contact Bethany Birago, a teacher in the HST program.

Email: bbirago@bcps.org

Information for Students/Parents

Link to an online Prezi presentation

For your convenience, a Prezi presentation on the HST program has been prepared for you. This presentation gives an overview of the program along with pictures to show students the program's environment. Feel free to use this presentation when discussing the HST program with students.

To access the Prezi, click the link (ERROR: Link not currently available. Come back later)

If you have never used Prezi before, here are some instructions and advice to consider:

- Prezi works similar to a PowerPoint presentation
  - To start the Prezi, press the play button
  - To advance the Prezi from slide to slide, press the right arrow on the screen or on your keyboard
- The Prezi does not have any audio, so consider looking over this manual and the Prezi ahead of time to get an idea of what to talk about with students

Printable Pamphlet

On Page 8, you can find a pamphlet that gives brief details of the HST program. Print that page off for any students and parents interested in more information.

Western School of Technology and Environmental Science

Home of the wolverines

Health Science Technology

Your first step to a bright future

Interested in joining the Health Science Technology program at Western Tech? Great! I'm sure you have a lot of questions about the program, so let's get you some answers.

What is the Health Science Technology (HST) program all about?

- HST is a 4-year magnet school program that replaces normal public school education for grades 9 – 12. You will go to Western Tech to learn about medicine, medical practices, and the technology of various medical fields to prepare you for higher education and ultimately the job of your dreams.

What all does Western Tech offer outside of classes?

- Western Tech offers over 20 different clubs for you to join, numerous athletic programs, and everything else you could want from a high school.

Where can I learn more about magnet schools and how they work?

- You can visit the Baltimore County Public Schools' (BCPS) website (http://www.bcps.org/offices/omp/) or call 410-887-4127.

How do I apply to Western Tech?

- Go to the BCPS website or call them to find out about how to apply and when applications are due. In order to be considered for Western Tech, you need to score a 70% or higher on the BCPS assessment test, which you can learn about by following this link (http://www.bcps.org/offices/omp/middle/apply_docs.asp) or by calling 410-887-4127.

Where can I learn more about the HST program?

- You can visit the HST web page on Western Tech's website (http://www.edline.net/pages/Western_School_of_Technology/Magnet_Programs/Health_Science_Technology) or call 410-887-0840. We also offer open house sessions for you to visit. Be sure to ask us about how and when you can visit.

Thank you for considering Western Tech and the HST program.