Criminal Justice or Nursing – 2 Possible Career Paths

Introduction: I have been considering two possible career paths, one in the field of criminal justice and the other in nursing or related occupations. I chose to explore these careers as the topic of this paper in order to gain a better understanding of these two possible careers. I found out both of these career paths provide a large variety of different job possibilities with various educational requirements and salary levels. Criminal justice jobs include many possibilities such as Park Ranger, Police Officer, Security Guard, Probation Officer, Private Investigator, Border Control Agent, U.S. Customs, and Child protective services (globeuniversity). Forensic Science Technicians work as crime scene investigators or in a laboratory. The crime scene investigator works long hours and the work is stressful while the laboratory technician works more normal business hours. Both of these jobs require a bachelor degree and the pay is good but the projected number of jobs is low at about 15,400 by 2020, a 19% increase from 2010 (Bureau). Nursing also has a wide variety of job opportunities including EMT’s, Dental Hygenists, nursing home care and home health care workers, lab technicians, working in Doctor’s offices or as a surgical nurse (Bureau). The purpose of this Thesis is to examine two possible career paths, Criminal Justice and Nursing, and discover the similarities and differences between them in order to be better able to choose a major when I attend college.
**Similarities:** Both careers fall into the broad category of Public Health and Safety and both offer a variety of job opportunities at an entry level educational requirement of an Associate Degree with advanced job opportunities and higher pay for applicants with at least a Bachelor Degree. Both career paths have the potential to provide a high level of job satisfaction but also could be stressful. There is a wide variety of pay levels dependent on the level of responsibility and your education. I have put together a graph of just three representative occupations from each of the two career paths. There are so many different types of jobs that it was hard to pick representative ones but I think the graph below shows a good cross section of the jobs available. The information in this graph comes from the following internet site (payscale).
Differences: There are many more job opportunities for applicants with a nursing degree (and more nursing graduates competing for the jobs). The jobs in the field of criminal justice would provide more opportunity to be outside while jobs in the nursing field tend to be mostly indoors.

Conclusion: There are many jobs in both fields that would be interesting. One job that I have been interested in would be that of a Park Ranger. The possible duties such as studying wildlife behavior, tending to injured guests, responding to emergency calls, and seeing that the park is properly maintained sound like a fun job. While this may not be a long term goal, I think it might be something to consider as an entry level or summer job. On the other hand, if I choose nursing as my primary field I could also start out as a park ranger or similar position. There are also many opportunities as a Certified Nursing Assistant at about the same entry level pay, around $30,000 per year, as the park ranger positions (salary). What career should I choose? It depends a lot on my grades in college but there are certainly many interesting jobs in these two fields. I’m excited to see what path opens up for me.

Graphs:
Works Cited


   http://www.criminaljusticeschoolguide.com/careers/park-ranger/