

Career Connections Series

Choosing a Major

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What is a “major?” A “major” is an “academic plan” of specific courses in a particular subject area. This combined with a set of University-wide requirements enable students to obtain a bachelor's degree. Choosing a major can be a stressful experience for any college student. One of the myths on campus is that a “good” major will lead to great jobs and hence, great careers. Hearing that can make the selection of a major an even more stressful process.

Selecting a major should not be based solely on job prospects but should also reflect your personality and interests. By looking within yourself you can build a personal inventory of your values, attitudes, and interests. Self-assessment of one can lead to fascinating discoveries. Answers to questions such as “What do you do well and enjoy doing?” can help you identify your skills and abilities. A good self-assessment will lead to a decision based on who “you” are.

Your decision should not be based solely on self-assessment. Students should take the time to do some in-depth research on prospective majors. In today's age of information technology, this is a relatively easy task. An internet search can provide a wealth of information on careers in different fields, or prospects with various college majors. You can visit the Career Section of the Student Counseling Services [Web page](#).

Take the time to organize and prioritize the information you gather. The knowledge gained will help answer questions like “Does the major match your interests, values and abilities?” “What kind of classes will you have to take?” and “What types of careers would this lead to?” Considering all these factors will lead you to pick a major you'll find challenging, rewarding and satisfying.

Nailing down a major is an exercise in patience. Don't rush into a decision. At the same time, don't feel as if you have only one chance to get it “right.” Majors don't necessarily lock you into a certain career track. Instead they instill in you a set of transferable skills. These skills you can use in any work setting. If you want some assistance with this decision, speak with a career counselor at the Career Center, Room 185 Student Services Building, or check out the “Choosing a Major” workshop offered by the Student Counseling Services.)