

How Do I Choose a Major That Will Support My Career?

Choosing a major is a big decision that is often overwhelming for first-year college students. Let's begin by dispelling a common myth regarding choosing a major:

Myth: You need to choose a major immediately!

Fact: In general, most college students do not know exactly what they are going to major in when they enter college. In fact, college students who take their time deciding on a major are more likely to persist through graduation. So relax, take your time, and make a wise decision.

Try using these resources to help you choose a college major that will support your career:

- 1. *The Quick and Easy Exercise: "Identifying Your Career and Major Interests"*** (see below)
This exercise is designed to help you discover your work-related interests. After completing the exercise, you will be able to explore career fields, occupations, and majors that fit these interests.
- 2. *DISCOVER:*** This website has assessments to help you explore your interests, abilities, and job values. DISCOVER will help you identify interesting majors and careers. **Ask your advisor and/or your career center if your college subscribes to DISCOVER. If so, it's free!**
- 3. *Your Academic Advisor:*** Your academic advisor can help you to develop a plan of study tailored to your career and educational goals, and help you to find all the information you need about academic requirements, careers, financial aid, and academic skills development. Advisors are also great resources about where to go on your campus for further help and information.
- 4. *Your Campus Career Center:*** Career centers typically offer assessments to help you identify interests or other traits that would suggest occupations you may be interested in, information about the type and extent of education required to pursue your interests, and counseling to assist you in thinking through your career options. Other career center services may include information on jobs and internships, and lists of alumni or professionals who would be willing to talk to you about their own careers. Career centers have a wealth of information about all the jobs that are out there!
- 5. *Professors/Alumni/Professionals in the field:*** These individuals provide valuable firsthand knowledge about the world of work. They can tell you the pros and cons of their professions and share some helpful tips for entering their occupations. The contacts you make during this exploration may be valuable resources when you get your degree and start looking for work. Your professors, the career center, or the alumni office can assist you in contacting alumni and professionals in the field if you would like to learn more.

Continue to the exercise "Identifying Your Career and Major Interests"