

CHOOSING A MAJOR

When some students apply to a college or university, they have already identified their major and know which career path they will follow.

But if you are one of the students who hasn't chosen a major and isn't sure which career interests you, relax. Many students across the nation are just like you. Faculty and staff at your school are prepared to help you make that important decision, but it's important that you don't delay meeting with the appropriate people and exploring the variety of resources available. Get the help you need to make your decision. Check out these resources:

1. Meet with Academic Advisers Every college or university employs advisers to help you plan your academic program. These advisers understand the needs of undecided students. They will help you find the specific resources you need to assess your interests and abilities. It's important to meet with an adviser as soon as possible even as early as your freshman orientation session.

2. Take an Interest Inventory Your academic adviser can direct you to the campus department that offers testing resources to identify your interests. These informational assessments help identify your strengths and interests and suggest career areas that fit your talents.

3. Enroll in General Education Courses No matter which school you attend, you will be required to complete a series of general education classes before you graduate. These requirements include a number of academic areas and provide you with a well-rounded education. If you are undecided about a major, this course work will expose you to the many academic and career areas available to you. Have fun with these classes and choose those that interest you.

4. Visit the Career Center Don't wait until your senior year to visit your career services center. These centers contain a wealth of information about employers: companies, school districts, and businesses large and small. Many centers contain videotapes, reports and special computer resources.

5. Talk with Teachers and Professors If you are taking a class that you enjoy, make an appointment to talk with the instructor about further study in that area. While you are still in high school, talk to teachers in your favorite classes about why that area of study interests them. They can suggest how a major in their subject area may lead to a career.

6. Use the Internet If you don't have access to professors and advisers, you can still explore on your own. You can visit your university's web site and use the resources of academic departments.

7. Attend Departmental Lectures Check the university calendar or student newspaper to learn about lectures or presentations by expert speakers. Academic departments often invite well-known speakers to campus for public lectures. Visit campus art exhibits, performances any event that piques your interest. All these events offer potential areas to explore.

Editorial provided by Michelle Howard, Director of Academic Advising Services at Central Michigan University.