



Choosing Your College Major

So, What Are You Going to Do With Your Life?

Some students start college knowing exactly what they want to major in. Others don't know what to major in, or have a career goal but don't know which majors will get them there. And in fact, most students find themselves switching majors during college. As you think about which major is right for you, remember that uncertainty is normal. The process of choosing a major — and discovering something that you are passionate about — can be an exciting one.

What is a college major?

A major is simply a specific subject that students can specialize in. Typically, between a third and a half of the courses you take in college are in your major or related to it. By completing a major, you demonstrate sustained, high-level work in one field; and in some majors, you prepare for a specific career. Depending on the college, you might be able to major in two fields, or have a major and a minor which means preparing for one career and then a related field as a second choice.

When should I declare a major?

At most four-year colleges, you aren't required to declare a major until the end of your sophomore year. If you're in a two-year degree community college program, you'll probably select a major at the start because your course of studies is much shorter and/or you will need to decide what type of A.A. (Associate of Arts- 2 yr.) degree you want.

How do I choose?

Take courses in areas that appeal to you, and then try to focus on a subject that motivates you. Make sure that you have genuine interest, though. You'll do better in class when you're interested, and your motivation will continue through college and into a job.

What if I want to go to graduate school?

If you think law school, medical school or grad school (college after you earn a B.A.- Bachelor of Arts-4 yr. degree) is in your future, you should know that some colleges offer pre-professional advising programs (such as premed or prelaw). These programs are not the same as majors — you still need to choose a major in another subject. As long as you fulfill a grad school's course requirements, it really doesn't matter what you major in.

Will my major force me to choose a specific profession?

Sometimes this can happen. If you specialize in something like nursing, accounting or engineering, you're learning a specific trade and will likely continue with that. Most majors, however, prepare you for a range of careers that you can be trained to handle once you graduate. For most students, picking a college major is not the same as picking a career. It will be up to you to pursue what you like. Remember, you're not alone. Choosing a major is usually done with the help of academic and peer advisers. *Visit the CHS Career Center to find out about what colleges offer specific majors.* You can also visit college websites, to see what programs/majors are offered.

Remember to choose a college that gives you many options, because it is common for young adults to change their minds about what career they wish to pursue! Your school counselor and career center can help provide you with information to help in making your decision.