



Choosing a Major: What You Need to Know



What Is a Major?

A **college major** is your primary area of study — a focused group of courses in a subject, discipline, or career field. It's how you'll spend much of your college experience, learning and building knowledge in one area.

A major helps you grow — your career evolves from there. Your major does not lock in your future career.

Many people work in fields *unrelated* to their major, and more than 30% of students change their major at least once.

So if you're still figuring it out — that's **normal**.



Important Terms to Know

Here are some helpful academic terms to understand as you explore your major:

- **Prerequisites** – Classes you must complete before you can take more advanced courses
- **Electives** – Optional courses that let you explore interests or develop specific skills
- **Concentration** – A specialized track within your major
- **General Education (GE)** – A broad set of required courses in areas like English, Math, Science, Social Science, and Humanities. These courses help you explore and build foundational skills.



Tip: Choose GE classes that interest you — they can help you discover possible majors.



Why It's Okay to Be Undecided

- You don't have to have it all figured out right away.
 - Changing your major is a common part of the college journey.
 - What matters is that you stay **curious, open-minded**, and take **active steps** toward discovering what feels like a good fit.
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Steps to Choosing a Major


Use the following steps to help you reflect and explore:

1. Self-Assessment

What are your interests, strengths, values, and goals?

2. Explore Courses

Try introductory or GE courses in different subjects to see what sparks your interest.

 Keep in mind: Classes take time, energy, and money — but even if you don't stick with a subject, the experience can still help clarify your direction.

3. Get Real-World Experience

- Try internships, volunteer opportunities, or part-time jobs related to fields you're curious about.
 - Talk to faculty or visit our Career Center for help finding opportunities.
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4. Talk to People in the Field

- Connect with professionals, professors, or alumni in areas you're interested in.
 - Ask them about what they do, what they studied, and what advice they have.
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5. Informational Interviews

These are short conversations with people who work in a job you might want someday.

You can ask questions like:

- What's a typical day like?
 - What skills are most important?
 - What do you wish you had known in college?
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Reminder: Your Major ≠ Your Career

Choosing a major is a big decision — but it's **not permanent**.

Many people build successful, meaningful careers that are different from what they studied in college. What matters most is:

- Knowing yourself
- Building experiences
- Staying flexible
- Asking for support when you need it



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