Advising for Undeclared Majors

No Major? No Problem!

Still trying to figure out what you want to be "when you grow up"? It seems like some people were *born* knowing what they wanted to do in life. But for many students, choosing a major and a career path is an agonizing prospect.

Of course, choosing a major is a big decision in your life. But it doesn't have to be stressful. DSU will help you.

Relax…But Don't Procrastinate

We encourage students to declare majors by the end of their first year. DSU will guide you through the process to help you arrive at a comfortable decision. And don't forget, you're not locked in. You can change your mind.

Professional academic advisors are available during office hours to talk to you about majors in their departments.

A Major is Not Forever

The fact is, most college students change majors at least once—including those people who *knew* what they were going to do! People follow different paths in finding a major. Some choose a subject that is their passion in life. Some *develop* a passion by getting an interesting part-time or summer job. Others choose a major that they believe will bring financial security. There is no one right way.

Let Yourself Dream

Deciding on a major requires some self-reflection—and imagination. Make a list of your skills, hobbies, dreams, things that inspire you, and people that inspire you. Think about what motivates you. Think about ways to make a contribution to society. Imagine yourself doing the unimaginable—from public speaking, to flying, to discovering a medical breakthrough. *Someone* has to do it—why not you?

My Dream Job is Out There—But *Where*?

Undecided students often say, "I know there must be great jobs out there that I would enjoy, but I don't know what they are." With a few clicks, you can read about hundreds of fascinating jobs, many of which you've probably never thought about. For example:

- Career Services [1] welcomes the opportunity in assisting you in realizing your full potential, interests, abilities, and academic experiences. Such a realization is essential in the process of selecting the career opportunity which will best provide personal growth and professional development.
- The College Board's Career Browser has a Major and Career Profiles [2] site with an overview of dozens of careers, including required skills, expected wages, and job demand. Are you willing to write reports? Work outside? Work under a deadline? These are questions that will help you think about what kind of work you'll enjoy and be well suited for.
- For more detailed descriptions of careers, browse the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Outlook Handbook [3]. Job listings include working conditions, training and education needed, and job market outlook.
- Princeton's Creating Your Career Path has smart ideas for figuring out what you want to do, step by step.
- Other jobs sites include jobprofiles.org, Job Hunter's Bible [4] and MonsterTrak's Major to Career Converter [5].

These sites can help you identify a few fields that sound intriguing, so you can take courses in those fields.

Map Your Course with DSU

At DSU, you will have a special academic advisor to help you explore your options. Students with the "undecided major" designation receive academic advisement in the Office of Mentoring, and Advising (OMA) until they declare a major in an academic department.

All DSU students, regardless of their majors, take courses in General Education [6] courses. These include a wide variety of introductory courses. The coursework will help you identify fields you might want to pursue. In addition, you will take a special section of University Seminar to help identify your skills and goals.

You can pursue numerous strategies for mapping your course at DSU. Perhaps you can work on two or three minors, with the goal of choosing one as a major and minoring in the others. If you just can’t decide between two majors, you can choose to pursue a double major degree.

Employers Like Explorers

Don't be afraid to explore a wide variety of courses. The experience of gaining a deep and broad education is enriching, regardless of where life takes you. Additionally, many students eventually wind up in fields not directly related to their major, whether in graduate school or in a job. In fact, many employers look for job applicants who are widely educated and can master a range of tasks.

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