Major & Career Exploration Tips

On-Campus Resources

Feeling especially overwhelmed or anxious about your major or career choice? Utilize your on-campus resources:

**CAREER DEVELOPMENT** (Student Center Rm. 238) - offers personalized one-on-one career coaching & counseling, group workshop presentations, and supplemental online resources.

**ACADEMIC SUCCESS CENTER** (Owen Hall Rm. 270) - provides professional and peer guidance & tutoring.

**ACADEMIC ADVISOR** (Each student is provided with their own) - offers hands on one-on-one guidance in making academic choices.

**PROFESSORS** (Friendly professors all around campus) - provide friendly knowledge and experience in making career choices for your future.

---

**Know Yourself**

Consider and reflect on your interests, personality, strengths, values, skills, career competencies, identity, and needs.

Did you know?

Approximately 77% of incoming, first-year students at the U of M indicate feeling undecided about their major. Additionally, national research suggests that more than 50% of students who come to college decided on a major will change their mind at least once.

---

My top values: What things are most important to me? What grounds me? What will I fight for?

My top interests: What captures my attention? What am I curious about? What types of things am I drawn to (i.e. people, data, ideas, things, numbers/finances, etc.?)


The skills/strengths I want to use/apply: Where do I naturally excel? What skills have I built that are transferrable from one area to another?

The Core Career Competencies I would like to develop:

- Analytical & Critical Thinking
- Applied Problem Solving
- Innovation & Creativity
- Ethical Reasoning & Decision Making
- Oral & Written Communication
- Teamwork & Leadership
- Engaging Diversity
- Active Citizenship & Community Engagement
- Digital Literacy
- Career Management

---

Adapted from CLA Career Services

Adapted from CLA Career Services

---

Did you know?

Approximately 77% of incoming, first-year students at the U of M indicate feeling undecided about their major. Additionally, national research suggests that more than 50% of students who come to college decided on a major will change their mind at least once.
## Reflection questions

How would you describe or define your personal identity or culture? (i.e. race, ethnicity, gender, class, ability, age, religion, family position, etc.) How has your identity influenced (either positively or negatively) your ideas about a major or career path?

What are some needs and other influences that may impact your decision? (i.e. expectations about pay, location, abilities, family or cultural expectations, education/training needed, life experiences, special circumstances, etc.)

What connections or themes do you see within your Values, Interests, Identity, Personality, Skills/Strengths, Needs?

## Career assessments

Career assessments may help you identify and understand these factors in further depth:

- Interests: Strong Interest Inventory Assessment (available from Career Development for $15)
- Personality: Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (available from Career Development for $15)
- Strengths: StrengthsQuest Assessment (available from Career Development for $10)
- Including several other brief assessments for FREE

## Know Your Options

Actively explore your options to gain insights and clarity on your major and career options.

### Research

- Research the majors at the University, their required courses, and your level of interest and skill:
  - capeplan.umn.edu/action-plan-category/majors
- Research occupations related to the major to see the common pathways (onetonline.org; whatcanidowiththismajor.com/major/; www.bls.gov/ohi)
- Search GoldPASS and other job search sites to analyze job descriptions
- Use LinkedIn to identify where alumni work and what they do

### Observe

- Try job shadowing in an area of interest
- Attend relevant events hosted by a department or industry of interest
- Visit spaces that students/professionals frequent to get a sense of the culture

### Discuss

- Meet with a career counselor for guidance on the career development process
- Set up an informational interview with an alumnus to gain insights on their major
- Join the Major Network:
  - cape.unm.edu/services/network
- Speak with a professor to learn about relevant research or trends in the industry
- Talk to your advisors for course planning advice
- Consult friends and family

### Experience

- Complete an internship
- Volunteer with local organizations
- Do a research project with a faculty member
- Gain work experience on or off campus
- Study in another city or country
- Join a student organization related to your major and/or career goals

### Reflect

Always remember to reflect on what you learned from any given experience, positive or negative. Remember, even if your experience was less than enjoyable, you gained insights that should help you narrow down or expand your options.