Decision-making Process

Step 1: Identify the Decision to be Made
Before you begin gathering information, it is important that to have a clear understanding of what it is you are trying to decide. Examples of decisions you might consider are:

- What is going to be your choice of major and/or career field?
- How does your choice of major relate to the world of work?
- Would I like to select a minor to compliment my major?

Step 2: Get to Know Yourself
Before you select a major, choose a field or career, or decide whether you would like to go to graduate school, it is important to develop a sense of who you are - your interests, values, skills, and personality. Some questions you might wish to consider are:

- What brings you joy? (Interests)
- What activities have you enjoyed doing? (Skills)
- What characteristics need to be present in your ideal job or career? (Values)
- How would others describe your personal qualities? What is your attitude like? (Personality)
- How would you describe the people with whom you would like to work? (Personality)

Step 3: Begin to Identify Options (Career Exploration)
Exploring the world of work and academic majors includes gathering additional information about ideas you are already considering as well as learning about new ideas and options you have not considered. Information is empowering. There are many sources of information about college majors and careers.

- What areas in the world of work relate to who you are?
- Are you able to write down the options you are considering in your choice of major or career field?

Step 4: Factors Influencing Decisions
As you enter into the process of deciding on an education and career plan, including your choice of a major and/or career field, you may experience factors, both positive and negative, that are impacting your ability to identify options, choose among alternatives, make a decision, or follow through with your choices.

- What internal and external factors are present that may influence your decision or your choice of alternatives?
- What has been your experience with making decisions in the past?

Step 5: Evaluate each Option/Alternative that will Best Address the Decision(s) to be Made
After you have competed your career and/or educational research, including speaking with people in your field(s) of interest, you are now ready to identify and evaluate your options.

- Are you able to assess the possible outcomes or consequences for the decisions to be made?
- Have you identified the pros and cons for each alternative, while also considering the factors influencing your decision?

Step 6: Design a Course of Action to Implement the Decision(s)
Based upon the information you have gathered and analyzed, you should now be in the position of choosing among several alternatives.

- Have you outlined your plan of action?
- Are you able to identify action-steps to implement your decision?