Choosing a Major Workshop

Academic Advising and Career Center: Lassen Hall 1013
Academic Advising: advising@csus.edu • www.csus.edu/acad • (916) 278-6351
Career Center: careercenter@csus.edu • www.csus.edu/careercenter • (916) 278-6231
### Types of Major Considerations

#### Pre-Major and Expressed Interest Definition Policy

**Pre-Major**
- Students accepted into the major after completing prerequisites
- Specific pre-requisites required
- Submit Major Change Form after prerequisites are completed

**Expressed Interest**
- An impacted major
- Are not automatically assigned major status
- Must successfully complete any specified pre-requisites and a supplemental application to apply to the major

**Non-Impacted Major**
- Students must obtain permission from the major advisor to declare the major
- No application process
Choosing a Major Considerations

- Connecting your major to career choices.
- Develop plan B and plan C.
- Take action steps to alleviate stress.
- Identifying career options generates excitement and engagement.
- University policy states students must declare a major by 60 units.
- Be informed about major requirements.
Example of Expressed Interest Scenario: Nursing

- Express Interest in Nursing student applies to Nursing Program, but is not admitted.
- She completes pre-major requirements for Biological Sciences and declares that major.
- Interested in a Sonography school in the Bay Area.
- Gets a part-time office job with a radiological company in Sacramento.
- Visits school and completes prerequisites at Sac State.
- Completes bachelor’s degree in Biological Sciences and begins Sonography school in the Bay Area the following semester.
- Graduates from Sonography school and gets a job at a local hospital.
Roadmap to Choosing a Major

Explore Who You Are

Career Options

Decide

Academic Options

Experiential Education
Exploring Who You Are...

Self-Exploration is part of deciding on a major/career path:

- Interests
- Skill Preferences
- Favorite Classes
- Work and Personal Values
- Natural Talents
- Life Experiences
- Motivation
- Interests
- Personality
- Aptitude
- Family and Cultural Considerations

Explore Who You Are
Explore Who You Are and What You Enjoy!

- What are your interests?
- What are your natural talents?
- What classes have you enjoyed in school?
- What have you dreamed about doing?
- What are your hobbies or things you like to do for fun?
- What life experiences/activities have you had that you enjoyed?
- What are your favorite subjects to discuss?
Values Shape Who We Are!

- Elements of your life which you find personally important.
- Core beliefs. Are those things that really matter.
- Are things against which you measure your choices, whether consciously or not.
- Values can relate to your personality, needs, or social context.

- Identify the times when: you were happiest, you were most proud, and you were most fulfilled and satisfied.
Relate Your Interests to Your Choice of Major...

The student who is passionate about architecture chooses a major in Interior Design.

The student who likes to build and repair computers chooses to major in Computer Engineering.

The student who loves hiking and the outdoors chooses to major in Recreation, Parks and Tourism Administration.
Activity #1: Self-exploration

- Take a few minutes to reflect on the questions under Step #1 of the Choosing a Major Handout. Speak with someone next to you about how your answers may relate to major and career choices.

- Now, circle 2-3 industries you would like to research and/or learn more about on the bottom of the same page.

- Use the links on the bottom of Page 4 of the Choosing a Major Handout to research occupations, industries and majors of interest.
Considerations When Selecting a Major...

- How many units are required for the major?
- Are there concentrations/options? If yes, which ones interest you?
- Is the major impacted? If yes, what are the pre-major requirements?
  - GPA: ____________
  - Application Process to get into the major: Yes ☐ No ☐
- Are there any math and/or science requirements and how have I done in those classes in the past?
- If you are on financial aid, how will changing or choosing your major impact it?
- Where is the Department office?
Considerations When Selecting a Major...

- Who is my faculty advisor?

- Expressed Interest students are undeclared, and must apply to their designated program when they have met the appropriate prerequisites and other program criteria.

- Expressed Interest students cannot declare a second major.

- Pre-majors are bona fide majors and are advised by their departments. Pre-majors are Biological Sciences, Exercise Science, all Engineering programs and Computer Science.
Where to Receive Advising?

**Expressed Interest Program:**
- Business
- Design
- Criminal Justice
- Psychology
- Health Science
- Nursing

**Are Advised By:**
- College of Business
- Department of Design
- Academic Advising and Career Center
- Academic Advising and Career Center
- Academic Advising and Career Center
- Academic Advising and Career Center

Research Academic and Career Options
Choosing a Major First

Professional Careers that look for any major

Graduate school

Teaching: college or K-12

Peace Corps, JusticeCorps, AmeriCorps, Add a certificate

Careers that related directly or indirectly to your major, coursework, or concentration

Add a certificate

Research Academic and Career Options
Choosing a Career Path First

- Choosing a Career Path:
  - What steps do I need to get there?
  - What major(s) and internships will work for that field?

Research Academic and Career Options
Remember the Power of Liberal Arts Majors

- Humanities and Religious Studies
- English
- Psychology
- Communication Studies
- Ethnic Studies
- Women’s Studies
- Sociology
- Anthropology
- Asian Studies
- Liberal Studies
### Sample of Liberal Arts Occupations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Account Executive</th>
<th>Marketing Assistant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program Manager</td>
<td>Mass Media Assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales Representative</td>
<td>Project Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bookstore Manager</td>
<td>Public Relations Assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buyer</td>
<td>Research Assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Assistant</td>
<td>Special Events Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Aid Counselor</td>
<td>Speech Writer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government service</td>
<td>Stockbroker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources Assistant</td>
<td>Press Secretary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance Agent</td>
<td>Operations Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claims Representative</td>
<td>Media Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Underwriter</td>
<td>Paralegal Assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loan Officer</td>
<td>Staff Assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lobbyist</td>
<td>Real Estate Broker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager Trainee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Occupations may require additional training and/or experience*

**Research Academic and Career Options**
Online Catalog

- Explore major/minor options
- Review academic policies
- Learn about GE/major requirements
- Course descriptions
- Find major department contact information and locations
- Explore career possibilities

Research Academic and Career Options
Online Catalog Major Information

Research Academic and Career Options
Activity #2: Exploring Majors

- Review the list of colleges, majors, and concentrations that are on page 2 of your Choosing a Major Handout.

- Place a check next to any majors/concentrations you would like to explore more or learn more about.

- Star 3 majors / concentrations you would like to research first.
And other positions within the same industry...

- Accounting
- Marketing
- Nursing
- Human Resources
- Sales
- Lobbyists
- Distributors
- Training and Development
- Finance
- Physicians
- Customer Service
- Medical Records
- Insurance
- Administrators

Career Options
Important Questions About the World of Work....

- What is a typical day like and what is the work environment like?
- What are the academic requirements that are required for the professional school?
- What is the employment outlook for your chosen profession?
- What are some of the pressing issues in the field?
- What challenges does the profession present?
- What are the career options?
Creating Career Options for Your Major...Strategies

- **Conduct Internet Searches:** Use Google and type in the following search strings...
  - English careers
  - allintitle:”marketing careers”
  - sociology inurl:careers
  - “molecular biology” inurl:careers site:*.edu
Creating Career Options for Your Major...Strategies

- **YouTube**: Use YouTube to search for videos on your career field of interest. Search on the following:
  - _____________ Careers
  - A day in the life of a ____________

Career Options
Activity #3: Researching Career Options

- **Activity #3**: Talk with the person next to you about which occupations/industries you would like to research first.
Experiential Education

- Part-time jobs
- Volunteering
- Join a student club
- Internship/cooperative education
- Job shadowing or informational interviews
- Study Abroad
- Career and Major Fairs
- Service Learning
1.) Informatonal Interviews/Job Shadowing: Meeting and/or observing professionals in the field is a great way to learn about career options related to your major.

2.) Attend Employer lectures and Panel events: Academic departments, student clubs and the Career Center sponsor employer career panels and lectures.

3.) Internships Related to Your Interests
   - Go to Google:
   - Type any of the following search strings:
     - “stem cell” inurl:internship
     - Intitle:”physics intern”
     - geology inurl:co-op
     - California conservation inurl:intern
     - “stem cell research” California inurl:internship
4.) Volunteer Opportunities: Volunteering can be a great way to begin gaining experience

Use:
- www.idealist.org
- www.handsonsacto.org
- www.volunteermatch.org
Creating Career Options for Your Major...Strategies

- 5.) Meet with Faculty Advisors in your academic department of interest:

- 6.) Student clubs or organizations: Visit clubs that relate to your field or area of interest. Go to: www.csus.edu/soal to search for student clubs and organizations on campus.

- 7.) Locate Professional Associations or Societies related to your major: Use Google and type the following: ____________ association OR society (field of interest)
Activity #5: Experiential Education

- **Activity #5**: Share with each other which experiential education opportunities you have done and/or would like to do in the future.
Decision-Making Influences and Strategies

- Family and Cultural Influences
- Internal and external challenges and support
- Creating a support system
- Peer pressure
- Creating plan B and plan C
- Make the most of unplanned events
- Always keep your options open
- Try it – even without knowing the outcome
- Go ahead and make mistakes
- Visit the Career Center😊!

Adapted from: Luck is No Accident, Making the Most of Happenstance in Your Life and Career, Krumboltz and Levin, 2004
Useful Web Resources

- Catalog: [http://catalog.csus.edu/](http://catalog.csus.edu/)
- Registrar’s Office: [www.csus.edu/registrar](http://www.csus.edu/registrar)
  - Major/Minor declaration
  - Graduation Information
  - Additional forms
- Academic Advising: [http://www.csus.edu/acad/](http://www.csus.edu/acad/)
- Career Center: [http://www.csus.edu/careercenter/](http://www.csus.edu/careercenter/)
- Counseling & Psychological Services: [http://www.csus.edu/psysrv/](http://www.csus.edu/psysrv/)
Roadmap to Choosing a Major

1. Explore Who You Are
2. Career Options
3. Academic Options
4. Experiential Education
5. Decide