

Declaring a major can be a complex decision, and may feel like a big commitment, it is wise to put intention into that decision. These tips and resources can help you declare a major with confidence and develop lifelong skills that can be used to explore options and make decisions.

Below are some common stages of exploration. Remember these are generalized and everybody's journey is unique. Meet with your academic or career advisor to help determine the best plan for you.

I don't know how to begin or decide

- Identify your interests, skills and values.
- Identify what experiences you would like to have; what knowledge you would like to have; and how would you like to utilize your experiences and knowledge?
- Meet with an academic or career advisor to discuss ideas and create an individualized plan.

I have many interests and am trying to decide on one.

- Define your long term values and goals
- Reflect on what you need to feel confident in making decisions.
- Determine common characteristics to your interests.
- Meet with an academic or career advisor to discuss ideas and create an individualized plan.

I'm currently declared but reconsidering my options.

- Reflect on why you chose that major initially.
- Are there other majors that share similar characteristics?
- Identify why you feel it is not the best fit for you anymore.
- Determine what you look for in a new major path.
- Meet with an academic or career advisor to discuss ideas and create an individualized plan.

Resources to help you explore majors

- Explore HSU's Majors at: <http://www.humboldt.edu/programs/type>
- Visit the Exploration Tips & Resources page for more: <http://www.humboldt.edu/acac/exploration-tips-resources>
- Check out careers in your major of interest: <http://www.humboldt.edu/acac/students/career-guides>
- Consider an assessment tool: MyPlan (<http://www.humboldt.myplan.com>) or StrengthsQuest (See the Academic and Career Advising Center for an access code and more information)

Tips to Declare a Major with Confidence

- Explore majors that reflect your interests.
- Identify specific interests within the majors.
- Understand the major requirements for graduation.
- Connect with other students in the major.
- Consult with faculty in the major.
- Take introductory courses within the major
- Join clubs, volunteer with organizations and/or connect with the community.

Networking and Informational Meetings to Explore Majors

Networking: Interact with everyone you can for information, advice and job leads. This can be done with people you know, or with people you don't know in order to expand your network.

Informational meetings: Reach out to faculty or career professionals to gain more information or advice about their academic or career field to make more informed decisions.

To prepare for your discussion, figure out your interests, values, skills, and goals. If you need assistance you can start with asking people who know you really well. You can also meet with your academic and/or career advisor. Research as much as possible about the major or career field you are interested in by reviewing major websites, major requirements, and career guides.

Questions to ask students when exploring majors:

- Why did you choose your major?
- Who helped you choose your major?
- What do you enjoy most about your major? Least about your major?
- What are some of the common benefits of your major? Challenges?
- What is a typical experience for students in your major?
- How does your major support your career plans?
- What are the introductory courses like? How do they compare to the upper division courses?
- What have your experiences with faculty been like in your major?
- Who else should I talk to?



Questions to ask faculty or Department Chairs:

- What is most rewarding about this major/field? Most challenging?
- What are some courses I should take to explore/test out this major?
- (If the major requires to have a concentration or emphasis) How do I best choose an option?
- Is there flexibility to add a minor to this major?
- How flexible is the major with substituting or taking alternative courses?
- How interactive are the courses for the major? (professor to student ratio, field work, hands-on, etc.)
- What is networking like in this major? What about the student community record?
- Are there things outside the classroom I could/should be doing (volunteering, internships, clubs, developing portfolio)?
- What kinds of career opportunities are there for students with this major?
- What are your recent graduates doing? Are they employed in the field? Attending Graduate School?
- What is the estimated time to complete this major?
- Who else should I talk to?

Requesting Meetings

Thank the person for their time. If you met in person, send a thank you note. "Dear (insert name), my name is (In your name), I'm a student at Humboldt State University and I'm interested in knowing more about (insert major/minor). Would it be possible to meet with you for a few minutes to ask some questions and get your advice?"