STEP THREE: The College Major & Career Connection

Students often choose a college major as if they’re choosing a career yet the connection between college majors and careers is not always clear. The College Major & Career Connection is designed to help you understand how college majors and careers are linked.

Start by reading the multiple choice questions below and circle your answer for each one. Correct answers will be revealed at the end of this handout.

1. To obtain work as a Registered Nurse, you should major in:
   a. Biology
   b. Nursing
   c. English
   d. Any of the Above

2. To obtain work as a Sportscaster, you should major in:
   a. Communications
   b. History
   c. Psychology
   d. Any of the Above

Required or Flexible Choices?
To decide on the best college major for you that’s in line with your favorite career interests, you will want to answer the following question…

Is a specific college major required for any of my top favorite career interests or do I have flexibility with choice of a college major?

Give it a try…

➢ A favorite career interest of mine is ____________________________________________

Is a specific major required for this career interest? Yes or No
If I answered yes, I believe the major required is ______________________________

➢ Another favorite career interest of mine is ________________________________________

Is a specific major required for this career interest? Yes or No
If I answered yes, I believe the major required is ______________________________

While some careers do require a specific major, in most cases there’s way more flexibility with choice of a college major than students realize. It’s important to do some digging to answer this question and to 100% verify that your thoughts and digging are accurate. Contact your advisor, faculty, and people who work in your career interest areas to help you verify your answers.
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The Big Picture and ‘Building a Bridge’

Students sometimes make career decisions without considering a longer term perspective. They forget to keep the ‘big picture’ in mind and ONLY think about the next week, the next month or the next year. This quote will help you to realize the importance of taking that ‘big picture’ perspective when making career planning decisions.

*The average college grad changes jobs once every three years and changes career fields two to three times in a life time.*

The United States Department of Labor

Once you’ve identified a favorite career interest, your next step is to figure out...
- Where am I now when it comes to my number one favorite career interest?
- What will it take to get me actually working in this career? …and
- What’s going to help me ‘build a bridge’ to take me from where I am now to where I want to be?

BUILDING A BRIDGE

Students can use a combination of academic coursework, study abroad, service learning, volunteer experiences, extra-curricular activities, internships, Co-op, and employment experiences to help them simultaneously explore and prepare for their top areas of interest.

You don’t have to pick just one career interest. Keeping in mind the Department of Labor quote, you might decide that you would like to experiment with more than one career interest and build two or three bridges instead of one.
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PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER...
WHAT’S MY CURRENT COLLEGE MAJOR, TRANSFER, AND CAREER STATUS?

College Major
• Which of the following best describes my current situation for deciding on a college major (or certificate program)?
  ____ I am certain about my chosen NHTI major which is ________________________________.
  ____ I have a few ideas, but need more time and/or help understanding my options.
  ____ I keep changing my mind about choice of college major.
  ____ I am totally confused about my college major choice.

• What questions do I have related to choice of a college major…or what would I like to know about college majors that I don’t yet know?

College Transfer
• Do I plan to go on for a Bachelor’s Degree?  Yes or No
• If I plan to transfer, do I know what school(s) interest me?  Yes or No
  If yes, list school(s)_____________________________________________________________
• If I plan to transfer, do I know what Bachelor’s Degree Program(s) or Major(s) interest me?
  Yes or No
  If yes, list Program(s)/Major(s)____________________________________________________

• What questions do I have related to the college transfer process?
  NOTE:  See our Transfer Options Link for support with the college transfer process!

Career Direction
• What career possibilities interest me most?

• Is a specific college major required for any of my top career interests or do I have flexibility with choice of a college major?

• What questions do I have about my career interest areas?  What are some examples of things I could do to ‘build one or more bridges’ towards my career interests… that is to experiment with them by experiencing them directly?

College Major and Career Needs
• Based on what I’ve written on this form, what are my current career development needs?
  □ I need help deciding on a college major
  □ I need help with the college transfer planning/preparation process
  □ I need help figuring out or narrowing my career interests
  □ I need help learning about and experiencing my career interests
  □ I need help figuring out how to overcome obstacle(s) to my career interest(s)
Answers to multiple choice questions…

3. To obtain work as a Registered Nurse, you should major in:
   a. Biology
   b. Nursing
   c. English
   d. Any of the Above
The correct answer is b. Nursing.

4. To obtain work as a Sportscaster, you should major in:
   a. Communications
   b. History
   c. Psychology
   d. Any of the Above
The correct answer is d. Any of the Above

In some career fields, like nursing, a specific college major is required for entrance into this career field. For many career fields, however, (sportscasting included) there’s quite a bit of flexibility for career preparation and entrance. Keep this in mind as you choose your courses and make your way.