

Choosing A Major

Determine your Interests

You may already have preferences based on your high school experience. Maybe you already know you like hard sciences or don't do well in languages or have always wanted to write. Preferences are a good starting point to identify interests.

If you're confused about your interests, try the following resources at Career Services:

Choices: a computer program that helps you identify your interests, skills and values.

Focus 2: Career Assessments: pick up a brochure on our career testing program.

Identify Majors That Match Your Interest

Read the UCSB Catalog: You will see which majors demand more units than others, which have pre-major requirements, review course content, etc. For example you might learn that courses in psychology tend to focus more on cognition/perception and less on counseling than you expected.

Talk to other students in the major about what they do and don't like about it.

Spend an hour in the UCen Bookstore **skimming textbooks** required for upper division classes in majors you considering. Can you see yourself spending time reading them?

In the first week of class each quarter, **audit one or two meetings of upper division courses** in majors you are considering. (Lower division courses are often not good barometer of a major.) Do the classes sound interesting?

Talk to undergraduates advisors or peer advisors in departments you are considering.

Ask:

- ✦ "What types of students do well in your major?"
- ✦ "What kinds of jobs do students get who graduate with your major?"
- ✦ What research interests do faculty in your department have?"

Talk to alumni or professionals in fields you are considering. You can get names of career professionals who can talk to you from Career Connections or the Rotary Club Mentorships Program, both Career Service. Ask a peer or advisor how.

Attend a "Choosing a Major" workshop offered at CS. Look for the quarterly calendar.

For a more in-depth discussion on how to choose a major, drop by Career Services to talk to a Career Counselor or to academic advisors at the College of Letters and Science. Career Services also has a library dedicated to various industries, as well as an online database of career profiles.

Declare Your Major

Talk to either the Undergraduate advisor in the department or with an academic advisor at the L&S for help with the steps of getting yourself signed into a specific major.

Get Related Experience

Once you're declared, you should begin to consider either part-time work or internships in fields related to your interests. This "hidden curriculum" will help you get employment after graduation. For information on internships, come to Career Services, check out internships at www.career.ucsb.edu or on GauchoLink or ask your undergraduate advisor.