



*Don't let assumptions and misinformation hold you back in choosing the major you think you might want. Take this short quiz. Answers are on the back.*

# Myths About Majors

1. My major will determine my career. T F
2. My major will limit my choices for graduate or professional schools. T F
3. Engineers and business economics majors are more employable, and make higher salaries than liberal arts. T F
4. The earlier you choose a major the better. T F
5. Most college students choose their majors based on how much money they can make. T F
6. Your GPA is the most important criteria employers look for when hiring. T F
7. There is only one "right job" for you in terms of your ability. T F
8. Double majors do not necessarily make you more marketable. T F
9. Most people are "underemployed" in jobs that don't match their personal interests and abilities. T F
10. "Without work all life goes rotten. But when work is soulless, life stifles and dies." T F

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## **Resources On Reserve in the Career Resource Room:**

- *Major Options: The Student's Guide to Linking College Majors & Career Opportunities During and After College.* Nicholas Basta H.19
- *Peterson's Liberal Arts Jobs: What They Are & How To Get Them.* Burton J. Nadler H.23
- *College Majors & Careers: A Resource Guide for Effective Life Planning.* Paul Phifer H.72
- *The College Majors Handbook: Actual Jobs, Earnings & Trends for Graduates of 60 College Majors.* Neeta Fogg C.10
- *Great Jobs for Liberal Arts Majors.* Blythe Camenson H.53

## *Answers To Major Myths Quiz*

1. **FALSE.** Even someone in a highly structured major like electrical engineering might end up doing a variety of things. **More than half of all college graduates pursue careers that are not directly related to their major.** In the liberal arts, the list of career options are endless including: business, education, government, health care, the arts, or non-profit organizations.

2. **FALSE.** Consider the art studio major who entered medical school, or the communications major who decided to pursue a Ph.D. in counseling psychology. Granted, no one is accepted into medical school without the appropriate science prerequisites, admissions test scores, and a statement of purpose which demonstrates a commitment to the field. Most college grads do not know long term career objectives until 3 to 5 years experience in the job market. **This may partly explain why two thirds of UCSB students who graduate wait before continuing their education.**

3. **FALSE.** Factors other than your major often play a more important part in determining your employability. Related work experience will often make any student more marketable. **The ability to interact with others, cope with pressure, speaking skills, problem solving ability and the ability to cope with change were rated as the top 5 skills most valued by recent graduates in preparing for their current professional position. Strong writing and computer related skills were next on the list.** Salaries may appear initially higher for engineering majors, but surveys show repeatedly how liberal arts majors often do better in management tracks where salary potentials often bypass those without such a broad based education.

4. **FALSE.** Imagine you are traveling down an interesting city street and you can't see where it may lead. Continue traveling. Should you see a more interesting street, you can try a new direction. The important thing is to start walking. **More than half of UCSB students change majors at least twice before they graduate. Many students remain undeclared until the end of their sophomore year.**

5. **FALSE.** According to NACE's 1996 Graduating Student & Alumni Survey, the top 4 criteria cited by college grads were personal satisfaction with the job's responsibilities and challenges, enjoyment, opportunity to use skills/abilities and personal development. This is not to say students don't seek financial independence and success. How much is enough will always be a personal decision to assess in view of one's personal lifestyle.

6. **FALSE.** GPA is actually 7th out of 10 criteria used by employers surveyed. **Related experience, communication, leadership, teamwork and computer skills are more important.**

7. **FALSE.** Most people change jobs an average of 6 or 7 times during a lifetime. Your abilities, interests and values can mean many different employment options.

8. **TRUE.** You may actually find a minor through the writing program or in another language which would complement your educational and career plans more effectively.

9. **TRUE.** Unfortunately it is estimated are underemployed. More reason to take will lead to a rewarding career/life.



that more than 85% of the U.S. population time to research and plan for a future that

10. **TRUE.** Most people would agree with work that provides a sense of purpose and meaning can also be expressed through family, service, hobbies

this quote by Camus. *"Most people yearn for ing for their lives. However, sometimes these needs or recreational activities."*