

Choosing a Major

Self Assessment

• Ask yourself:

What are your skills and abilities?

What are your interests?

What learning/testing style are you most comfortable with?

▶ Do you prefer problem solving over reading?

▶ Written exams over multiple choice?

Many majors have a certain style for learning and test taking

What are you looking for in a career?

▶ Money? Job security? Prestige? Creativity?

Many jobs don't require a certain major, but some do

• **Take an assessment** such as the Strong Interest Inventory or the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (*make an appointment with a career counselor for more information*)

Research Careers

If you have one in mind

• **Use your network** (including LinkedIn) to find alumni and community members in various fields and conduct informational interviews. Ask what major they were, if a certain major is required for that field, and what they recommend for a student looking to work in that field some day.

• **Gain experience** in that field through an internship, volunteer experience, research project, etc.

Research Majors

• **View** the *General Catalogue* online at catalogue.uci.edu/welcome and eliminate all majors that do not interest you

• **Research all remaining majors** by viewing their department's website and/or speaking with an academic advisor.

Make note of:

- Prerequisites
- Minimum GPA to enter major
- Are students in the major on a set track, or can you take classes whenever you want?
- What types of classes will you be able to take?
- What are your career options after graduation?

• **If you have not chosen a major yet**, make an appointment with a career counselor to help with the decision making process.

True Fact

It is believed that up to 50% of students change their major at least once. Some students change their major two or three times.

Not sure if you should change your major? Try this test taken from www.fastweb.com.

Give yourself one point for every question you answer YES.

- Do you get bored in your current major's classes?
- Are you doing poorly in your current major's classes?
- Did you choose your major without much thought?
- Do you keep reading/asking about other majors?
- Do you keep entertaining the idea of switching majors?

0 - 1 points: You're probably fine staying where you are

2 points: Think about changing your major and talk with a career counselor about it

3 - 5 points: It's probably time to change your major

Major ≠ Career

Keep in mind that you may pursue many kinds of careers with each major. Skills and experience will also be important factors that impact your career options.