

On-Campus Resources

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Feeling especially overwhelmed or anxious about your major or career choice? Utilize your on-campus resources:

CAREER DEVELOPMENT (Student Center Rm. 238) - offers personalized one-on-one career coaching & counseling, group workshop presentations, and supplemental online resources.

ACADEMIC SUCCESS CENTER (Owen Hall Rm. 270) - provides professional and peer guidance & tutoring.

ACADEMIC ADVISOR (Each student is provided with their own) - offers hands on one-on-one guidance in making academic choices.

PROFESSORS (Friendly professors all around campus) - provide friendly knowledge and experience in making career choices for your future.

Undecided on a major or career path? You are not alone! Many people feel this way. The good news is, you do not have to know the answer to that question to make progress toward your goals.

Career development is a lifelong process of self-discovery, exploration, active participation in meaningful experiences, intentional reflection, and decision-making and planning. Utilize the following strategies to guide your career exploration process:

Know Yourself

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Consider and reflect on your interests, personality, strengths, values, skills, career competencies, identity, and needs.

Did you know?
Approximately 77% of incoming, first-year students at the U of M indicate feeling undecided about their major. Additionally, national research suggests that more than 50% of students who come to college decided on a major will change their mind at least once.

My top values: What things are most important to me? What grounds me? What will I fight for?

My top interests: What captures my attention? What am I curious about? What types of things am I drawn to (i.e. people, data, ideas, things, numbers/finances, etc.)?

Aspects of my personality: Where do I get my energy? How do I take in information? What types of information do I trust? How do I tend to make decisions? How do I organize my time?

The skills/strengths I want to use/apply: Where do I naturally excel? What skills have I built that are transferrable from one area to another?

The Core Career Competencies I would like to develop:

- Analytical & Critical Thinking
- Applied Problem Solving
- Innovation & Creativity
- Ethical Reasoning & Decision Making
- Oral & Written Communication
- Teamwork & Leadership
- Engaging Diversity
- Active Citizenship & Community Engagement
- Digital Literacy
- Career Management

Reflection questions

How would you describe or define your **personal identity** or **culture**? (i.e. race, ethnicity, gender, class, ability, age, religion, family position, etc.) How has your identity influenced (either positively or negatively) your ideas about a major or career path?

What are some **needs** and **other influences** that may impact your decision? (i.e. expectations about pay, location, abilities, family or cultural expectations, education/training needed, life experiences, special circumstances, etc.)

What **connections** or **themes** do you see within your Values, Interests, Identity, Personality, Skills/Strengths, Needs?

Career assessments may help you identify and understand these factors in further depth:

- Interests: Strong Interest Inventory Assessment (available from Career Development for \$15)
- Personality: Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (available from Career Development for \$15)
- Strengths: StengthsQuest Assessment (available from Career Development for \$10)
- Including several other brief assessments for FREE

Know Your Options

Actively explore your options to gain insights and clarity on your major and career options.

Research

- Research the majors at the University, their required courses, and your level of interest and skill:
capeplan.umn.edu/action-plan-category/majors
- Research occupations related to the major to see the common pathways (onetonline.org; whatcanidowiththismajor.com/major/; www.bls.gov/ooh)
- Search GoldPASS and other job search sites to analyze job descriptions
- Use LinkedIn to identify where alumni work and what they do

Observe

- Try job shadowing in an area of interest
- Attend relevant events hosted by a department or industry of interest
- Visit spaces that students/professionals frequent to get a sense of the culture

Discuss

- Meet with a career counselor for guidance on the career development process
- Set up an informational interview with an alumnus to gain insights on their major
- Join the Major Network:
cape.umn.edu/services/network
- Speak with a professor to learn about relevant research or trends in the industry
- Talk to your advisors for course planning advice
- Consult friends and family

Experience

- Complete an internship
- Volunteer with local organizations
- Do a research project with a faculty member
- Gain work experience on or off campus
- Study in another city or country
- Join a student organization related to your major and/or career goals

Reflect

Always remember to reflect on what you learned from any given experience, positive or negative. Remember, even if your experience was less than enjoyable, you gained insights that should help you narrow down or expand your options.

Visit Goldpass.umn.edu to learn about job, internship, and volunteer opportunities.

Did you know? Informational interviews allow you to explore a specific industry, organization and/or position.

