

CHOOSING A MAJOR

What is a Major?

According to dictionary.com, a major is “a subject or field of study chosen by a student to represent his or her principal interest and upon which a large share of his or her efforts are concentrated.” It is part of the academic process that leads to earning a degree.

Most majors, however, are **not** designed with a career in mind. Unlike engineering, education and nursing, most majors do not have a direct correlation with your career path. So, you may find it advantageous to identify a career of interest first and then determine the major that best helps you reach that goal.

This process takes time. Talk to a career counselor, professors, and advisors. Consider internships and internet sites to explore. The Office of Career Planning & Development (CPAD) is here to help!

Factors that Block Major/Career Choices

External Factors

- You like the idea of studying the content but don’t know what to do with the particular major.
- You lack information and aren’t comfortable making an uneducated decision.
- You’re overwhelmed by the options.

Internal Factors

- You lack self-confidence in making critical decisions.
- You feel fear/anxiety. Your values are in conflict (e.g. you want high salary but are drawn to low-paying jobs).
- Others are causing internal conflict (e.g. parents have ideas about your career choice that conflict with yours).
- You have many interests and abilities and feel it is impossible to narrow your options.

Available Assessments

- TypeFocus: Assess your personality, interest, values, and skills
- Myers-Briggs Type Indicator: Personality assessment (fee)
- Strong Interest Inventory: Interest assessment (fee)

Schedule an appointment with a Career Planning and Development staff member to discuss your results and next steps.

Research Resources

First, talk to CPAD staff, faculty and advisors and then review these free resources here: <http://bit.ly/UTMartinExplore>

- CandidCareer
- What Can I Do With This Major?
- Occupational Outlook Handbook
- O*Net
- Vault

What steps do I take to choose a major?

1. Assess Yourself—ask yourself the following questions:

After taking the TypeFocus personality, interest, values, and skills assessments, ask yourself the following questions:

- What do I enjoy? Think about the classes you enjoy most, what they involve and why you enjoy them.
- What am I good at? This is no time to be humble. Identify your skills. Are they technical? Adventurous? Intellectual?
- What is most important to me? Your choice should match your values. Do you want to work behind the scenes or do you seek prestige? Do you need flexibility or security?
- What is the coolest job I can imagine? Describe it specifically, and seek people in this area to ask how they got there.
- Do I need to take a career assessment to better assess my skills, interests and values as they relate to the world of work?

2. Gather Information and Explore Options

- Explore potential majors and degrees using your Degree Works Flight Plan’s “What If” option.
- Examine available majors and eliminate those that do not interest you.
- Review the Catalog (<http://www.utm.edu/catalog.php>) and review the courses that interest you most in majors you like. Do the courses match your interests, skills and values?
- Review additional information about the majors on your short list: review CPAD resources, visit department web pages
- Talk with academic advisors, students and faculty members in your major area of interest
- Interview or job shadow people who work in field of interest.
- Research and make sure that major areas of interest are a fit for preparation for career areas of interest.

3. Evaluate and Make Your Major Decision

- Compile your information, and consider what you have learned.
- Weigh the pros and cons of each option and narrow your list down to two or three majors.
- Consider the feasibility of pursuing more than one major and/or adding a minor.
- Talk with an advisor or professor you respect or a career counselor and ask for additional resources and for guidance through the decision-making process.

4. Take Action

- Choose activities, internships, volunteer work and/or part-time jobs to develop skills in these areas.
- Talk to people already in these career fields.
- Enroll in course in the major you are considering.
- Declare a major!!



Create Your Short List of Majors

Here are the majors offered at UT Martin. Determine your level of interest in each major to create your short list of majors that interests you. Rank them: 1=Definitely possible; 2=Worth considering; 3=What is this?; 4=No way!

Available concentrations/options are italicized below the major/degree. Updates are here: www.utm.edu/degreeprograms.php

Accounting, BS in Business Administration	<i>Child & Family Studies</i>	<i>Music Education</i>
Agriculture, BS in Agriculture	<i>Dietetics</i>	<i>Performance</i>
<i>Agricultural Business</i>	<i>Family & Consumer Science Education</i>	Natural Resources Management, BS
<i>Agricultural Engineering Technology</i>	<i>Fashion Merchandising</i>	Environmental Management
<i>Agricultural Science</i>	<i>Food & Nutrition</i>	<i>Park Administration</i>
<i>Animal Science</i>	<i>Gerontology</i>	<i>Soil & Water Conservation</i>
<i>General Agriculture</i>	<i>Hospitality & Food Service Management</i>	<i>Wildlife & Fisheries Biology</i>
<i>Plant and Soil Science</i>	Finance, BS in Business Administration	Nursing, BS
Agricultural Business; B.S. in Agricultural	Fine & Performing Arts, BFA	Philosophy, BA
<i>Business</i>	<i>Studio/Visual Art, Graphic Design,</i>	Political Science, BA, BS
<i>Agribusiness</i>	<i>Theatre</i>	<i>General</i>
<i>Farm & Ranch Management</i>	<i>Teaching/Art Education & Dance</i>	<i>International Security Studies</i>
<i>Veterinary Technology & Management</i>	<i>Education</i>	<i>Legal Studies 3+3</i>
Biology, BS	Geoscience, BS	<i>Public Administration</i>
<i>Cell & Molecular Biology</i>	<i>Geography</i>	Psychology, BA, BS
<i>Ecology & Environmental Biology</i>	<i>Geology</i>	Secondary Education, BS in Education
<i>Organismal Biology</i>	<i>Meteorology</i>	<i>Secondary Biology</i>
Chemistry, BS	Health & Human Performance, BS in Health	<i>Secondary Business</i>
Chemistry, BS in Chemistry	& Human Performance	<i>Secondary Chemistry</i>
Communications, BA, BS	<i>Exercise Science & Wellness</i>	<i>Secondary Earth and Space Science</i>
<i>Broadcasting</i>	<i>Generalist</i>	<i>Secondary Economics</i>
<i>Media Design</i>	<i>Human Performance</i>	<i>Secondary English</i>
<i>News Editorial</i>	<i>Licensure K-12</i>	<i>Secondary French</i>
<i>Public Relations</i>	<i>Public Health</i>	<i>Secondary Geography</i>
Computer Science, BS	History, BA, BS	<i>Secondary Government</i>
<i>Data Science</i>	Information Systems, BS in Business	<i>Secondary History</i>
<i>Digital Hardware & Embedded Systems</i>	Administration	<i>Secondary Mathematics</i>
<i>Software & Systems</i>	<i>Business Communication</i>	<i>Secondary Spanish</i>
Criminal Justice, BS in Criminal Justice	<i>Management Information Systems</i>	<i>Special Education Interventionist 8-12</i>
<i>Corrections</i>	Integrated Studies, BS in Education	Social Work, BS in Social Work
<i>Courts and Law</i>	<i>Pre K-3 Licensure</i>	Sociology, BA, BS
<i>Forensics</i>	<i>K-5 Licensure</i>	Spanish, BA
<i>Generalist</i>	<i>6-8 Licensure</i>	Pre-Professional
<i>Law Enforcement</i>	<i>Special Education Interventionist K-8</i>	<i>Biosystems Engineering</i>
Economics, BS in Business Administration	Interdisciplinary Studies, BS	<i>Chiropractic</i>
<i>Economics</i>	International Studies, BA	<i>Cytotechnology</i>
<i>General Business</i>	<i>International Business & Development</i>	<i>Dentistry</i>
<i>International Business</i>	<i>International Diplomacy & Strategy</i>	<i>Dental Hygiene</i>
Engineering, BS in Engineering	<i>International Diversity & Interculturalism</i>	<i>Forestry</i>
<i>Civil</i>	Management, BS in Business	<i>Health Informatics and Information</i>
<i>Electrical</i>	Administration	<i>Management</i>
<i>Industrial</i>	<i>Management</i>	<i>Law</i>
<i>Mechanical</i>	<i>Sport Management</i>	<i>Medicine</i>
Engineering, BS in Mechanical Engineering	Marketing, BS in Business Administration	<i>Medical Laboratory Science</i>
English, BA	Mathematics, BA, BS	<i>Occupational Therapy</i>
<i>Legal Studies 3+3</i>	<i>General Mathematics & Statistics</i>	<i>Optometry</i>
<i>Literature</i>	<i>Mathematics</i>	<i>Pharmacy</i>
<i>Secondary English Education</i>	<i>Secondary Mathematics</i>	<i>Physical Therapy</i>
<i>Writing</i>	<i>Statistics</i>	<i>Physician Assistant</i>
Family and Consumer Sciences, BS in	Music, BA	<i>Veterinary Medicine</i>
Family & Consumer Sciences	Music, BM	