

Exploring Your Options at Mizzou

If you are like many students here at Mizzou, the idea of choosing a major may be overwhelming. It may make you feel better to know that the major you choose now will not commit you to a specific life-long career. In fact, you may be surprised by the large number of careers that do not require a specific degree. You should feel comfortable taking the first year or two of your college career exploring the numerous fields of study MU has to offer and the ever-growing assortment of careers available in the world of work. You will be happy to learn that in most cases, you can still graduate in a timely manner, even with a year or two set aside for exploration.

There are, however, some degree programs (such as Education, Music, or majors that involve a large amount of math and/or science) that depend heavily on sequenced coursework and may leave little room for elective credits. If you are considering one of these majors, you **should work closely with an academic advisor** in that major to make sure you are fulfilling the proper requirements. Choosing one of these majors late in your college career could necessitate summer school and/or delay your graduation by a semester or more.



GETTING STARTED...

The process of choosing a major or career involves **assessing your interests, abilities, and values**, learning about major or career options, and gaining experience to determine whether the major or career you've decided on is right for you.

The following list of suggested activities is meant to help you navigate this process in a suitable time frame and to get you off to a **successful start here at Mizzou**. Keep in mind that this list is simply a guide. You are not expected to complete every activity on this list, and you will need to move through the process at your own pace.

You may find that you will move back and forth between the different types of activities as you rule out certain majors or careers and become interested in new areas. The activities below are suggested for the freshman and sophomore years, although you may continue exploring into the junior year, if necessary.

ADJUSTING TO LIFE AT MU

- Develop time management skills to balance academics, extra-curricular and social activities, and other responsibilities.
- Learn to set and attain realistic academic and non-academic goals.
- Work to earn good grades from the beginning; the major or career you eventually decide to pursue may have competitive admission requirements.
- Build relationships with other students, faculty, and staff at MU.
- Familiarize yourself with the resources available to assist you at MU.
- Relax and take care of yourself. Take some time to unwind and relieve stress.
- Take advantage of the diversity at MU.

FALL SEMESTER, FIRST YEAR:

- ◆ Visit the MU Career Center which offers help finding part-time jobs, resume reviews, and help exploring majors and careers.
- ◆ Take advantage of services offered at the Learning Center, such as reading and study skills support, writing and proofreading assistance, and tutoring sessions in select subjects. The key is to take advantage of these services **BEFORE** you get behind!

EVERY SEMESTER:

- ◆ Plan to meet with each of your instructors and your academic advisor within the first month of class.
- ◆ Attend a cultural event or listen to a guest speaker. Attend an athletic event or participate in intramural athletics. Get to know people with diverse backgrounds and experiences.

WHEN NEEDED:

- ◆ Stress-management resources are available at the Counseling Center, Student Health, and the Wellness Resource Center.
- ◆ Seek assistance if you encounter difficulties with your adjustment (classes, roommate, time management, homesickness, etc.).

SELF-ASSESSMENT

- Identify your interests, abilities, and values.
- Think about and write down activities that you enjoy, activities that you excel in, and values that are important to you.
- Consider life goals that may influence your major or career choice.

FALL SEMESTER, FIRST YEAR:

- ◆ Sometime before Early Registration, complete an assessment at the MU Career Center, such as StrengthsQuest, the Missouri Occupational Card Sort, the Self-Directed Search, or DISCOVER. Meet with a Career Specialist to discuss your results.

SPRING SEMESTER, FIRST YEAR:

- ◆ Consider enrolling in SSC 2100, *Career Explorations*, which will guide you through the career planning process.

EVERY SEMESTER:

- ◆ Around midterm, assess your progress in classes and how they fit into your overall academic and career goals.

FALL SEMESTER, FIRST YEAR:

- ◆ Take a wide variety of courses that interest you and be open to new academic experiences.
- ◆ Enroll in an orientation course for a major you're considering.
- ◆ If you are still deciding on a major, meet with an academic advisor at Academic Exploration and Advising Services in the Student Success Center to learn about the various majors MU has to offer a student with your interests and skills.

EACH SEMESTER, FIRST & SECOND YEARS:

- ◆ Even if you have already chosen a major, take a wide variety of courses to make sure that you have not overlooked other possible majors of interest. This exploration may help you decide if you want complete a minor.

EVERY SEMESTER:

- ◆ Meet with an academic advisor and/or a faculty member in your major(s) of interest.

- Research different majors that are compatible with your interests, abilities, and values.
- Gather information from faculty, advisors, the MU Career Center, and the Undergraduate Catalog.
- Do not fall prey to the myth that every major leads to a specific career path.



MAJOR EXPLORATION

CAREER RESEARCH

- Learn about careers that are well-suited to your interests, abilities, and values.
- Talk to and get feedback from friends, family, instructors, advisors, and others about careers you would like to explore.
- Identify what education, experience, and skills are necessary for various careers of interest.

FALL SEMESTER, FIRST YEAR:

- ◆ Use DISCOVER, the Occupational Outlook Handbook, & other resources available online or at the MU Career Center to obtain specific information about different careers.

SPRING SEMESTER, FIRST YEAR:

- ◆ Conduct informational interviews with people working in your fields of interest.
- ◆ Shadow professionals in your fields of interest.

EACH SEMESTER, SECOND YEAR:

- ◆ Conduct informational interviews with employers in your fields of interest.

FALL SEMESTER, FIRST YEAR:

Join an MU student organization or participate in a volunteer activity. Attend Activities Mart near the beginning of the semester to learn about various opportunities.

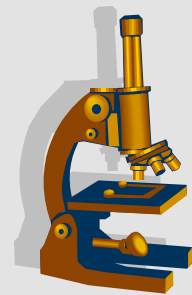
SPRING SEMESTER, FIRST YEAR:

- ◆ Enroll in a service learning course.
- ◆ Start thinking about summer opportunities such as employment, volunteer work, or job shadowing.

SECOND YEAR:

- ◆ Look into undergraduate research opportunities.
- ◆ Explore study abroad opportunities for next year.
- ◆ Take on more responsibilities in your extracurricular activities. Consider leadership positions.
- ◆ Join professional or student organizations for your major or prospective career, and seek career-related part-time jobs, volunteer work, and internships.

- Look into involvement opportunities that will allow you to use the skills you're learning in the classroom.
- Seek out opportunities to help you develop important career-related skills.
- Gain experience relevant to your major or prospective career.



EXPERIENCE

DECLARING YOUR MAJOR...

When you feel confident that a major you are exploring is compatible with your interests, abilities, and values, you should begin the

process of declaring that major. It is important to **officially change your major** as soon as possible after you have chosen one so that you can be assigned to a new academic advisor and begin receiving important communications from your department regarding topics such as registration, degree requirements, internship opportunities, etc.

The first thing you will need to do (if you have not already done so) is to meet with an academic advisor in your chosen major. The academic advisor should be able to determine whether or not you are admissible to the major and will be able to explain the process of declaring the major you have chosen. Keep in mind that **some majors may have an admission process that involves specific course and GPA requirements** and an application for which there may be a deadline. Additionally, if the major you have chosen is not in the same college or division as your current major, you will need to transfer divisions, a process for which there is also a deadline (November 15th for fall/April 15th for spring).



CONTACT INFORMATION

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD, & NATURAL RESOURCES

Academic Programs Office

2-64 Agriculture Building
882-8301

COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCE

Advising Support Services

107 Lowry Hall
882-6411

Academic Exploration and Advising Services

M110 Student Success Center
884-9700

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

Undergraduate Advising

111 Cornell Hall
882-7073

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Academic Programs Office

102 Hill Hall
882-7831

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

Academic Programs & Services

W1025 Lafferre Hall
882-4375

SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS

Student Affairs

504 Lewis Hall
882-8011

COLLEGE OF HUMAN ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

Student Services

117 Gwynn Hall
822-6424

SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM

Student Services

76 Gannett Hall
882-1045

SCHOOL OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Advising Office

124 Anheuser-Busch Natural Resources Building
882-7045

SCHOOL OF NURSING

Academic Advising

S235 School of Nursing
882-0277

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

7th Floor Clark Hall
882-6206



PLANNING FOR GRADUATION...

Now that you have officially declared your major, you should meet

with your new academic advisor to determine what **degree requirements** you have already satisfied and those you still need to meet. Your academic advisor can help you develop a plan to complete any requirements that must be fulfilled for graduation. In fact, some colleges and schools may require you to file some type of official graduation or degree plan after you have been admitted to the major.

You should continue to discuss your academic plans regularly with your advisor and continue your **career planning** with the **MU Career Center** or your school or college's placement office so that when graduation day arrives, you'll be ready to go!

Take advantage of these resources EARLY & OFTEN!

Academic Support

Student Success Center	909 Lowry Mall, 882-6803
Academic Exploration and Advising Services	884-9700
Academic Retention Services	882-9208
MU Career Center.....	882-6801
The Learning Center.....	882-2493
Disability Services.....	55 Memorial Union, 882-4696
Honors College	210 Lowry Hall, 882-3893
Mizzou Information Technology Help Desk.....	615 Locust Street, 882-5000
Service Learning.....	208 Lowry Hall, 882-0227
Study Abroad.....	N52 Memorial Union, 882-6007
Undergraduate Research Office	150 Bond Life Sciences Center, 882-5979



Career Services

Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources Career Services.....	2-64 Agriculture Bldg., 882-0088
Business Career Services	104 Cornell Hall, 882-6898
Education Career & Program Support Services.....	101 Hill Hall, 882-7772
Engineering Career Services.....	W1025 Lafferre Hall 884-4487
Journalism Career Services.....	76 Gannett Hall, 882-0995
MU Career Center.....	Lower Level Student Success Center, 882-6801

Involvement and Leadership Opportunities

Center for Student Involvement.....	2nd Floor MU Student Center, 882-3780
Greek Life	2nd Floor MU Student Center, 882-8291
Leadership Development Program.....	2nd Floor MU Student Center, 882-1815
Missouri Students Association	2nd Floor MU Student Center, 882-5522
MSA/GPC Box Office	2nd Floor MU Student Center, 882-4640
MSA/GPC Craft Studio & Darkroom.....	N12 Memorial Union, 882-2889
Office of Community Involvement.....	2nd Floor MU Student Center, 882-8291
Residence Hall Association	2nd Floor MU Student Center, 882-7615
Student Life	2nd Floor MU Student Center, 882-3621



Student Support

Gaines-Oldham Black Culture Center	813 Virginia Avenue 882-2664
Gay-Lesbian-Bisexual-Transgender Resource Center	N215 Memorial Union, 884-7750
International Center	N52 Memorial Union, 882-6007
Office of Multicultural Affairs	N214 Memorial Union, 882-7152
Women's Center	N214 Memorial Union, 882-6621

Health and Wellness

Counseling Center	119 Parker Hall, 882-6601
Mizzou Rec.....	213 Rothwell Gymnasium, 882-2067
Student Health Center	University Physicians Medical Building, 882-7481
Wellness Resource Center.....	200 Bingham Hall (Hatch and Schurz), 882-4634

