

# Exploring Your Options at Mizzou

If you are like many students here at Mizzou, the idea of choosing a major that will, in part, shape the course of your future may be overwhelming. It may make you feel better to know that the major you choose now will probably 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 to explore the numerous fields of study MU has to offer and the ever-growing assortment of careers the world of work has to offer. 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 course work or 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...

In general, the process of choosing a major or career involves assessing your interests, abilities, and values, learning about major or career options, and gaining major or career-related 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 even 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 to explore. The activities below are suggested for the freshman and sophomore years, although it is possible to continue exploring into the junior year, if necessary. Just remember that postponing the decision to declare a specific major or changing majors late in your academic career can lead to a range of consequences, including delayed graduation.

## ADJUSTING TO LIFE AT MU

- Develop time management skills to balance academics, extra-curricular & social activities, & other responsibilities.
- Learn to set & attain realistic academic & 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, & 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:

- ◆ Pick up a workshop schedule at the Student Success Center. Attend workshops on time management and goal setting.
- ◆ 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 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, & values.
- Think about & write down activities that you enjoy, activities that you excel in, & 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 the Missouri Occupational Card Sort, the Self-Directed Search, or DISCOVER. Meet with a career specialist to discuss your results.

### WINTER 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; 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 & Advising Services to learn about the various majors MU has to offer a student with your interests & 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 haven't overlooked other possible majors of interest; you may also decide to complete a minor.

### EVERY SEMESTER:

- ◆ Meet with an academic advisor &/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, & the Undergraduate Catalog.
- Don't 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, & values.
- Talk to & get feedback from friends, family, instructors, advisors, etc. about careers you'd like to explore.
- Identify what education, experience, & 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.

### WINTER 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.

### WINTER 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, & seek career-related part-time jobs, volunteer work, & 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 G.P.A. 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 (listed at the front of the *Schedule of Courses*).



### 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 Engineering Building East  
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  
882-4821

#### 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 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, 884-6803
Academic Exploration & Advising Services.....	884-9700
Academic Retention Services.....	882-9208
Career Center.....	882-6801
The Learning Center.....	882-2493
Disability Services.....	AO38 Brady Commons, 882-4696
Honors College.....	210 Lowry Hall, 882-3893
Information & Access Technology Services Help Desk.....	615 Locust Street, 882-5000
Service Learning.....	208 Lowry Hall, 882-0227
Study Abroad.....	N52 Memorial Union, 882-6007
Undergraduate Research Office.....	422 Tucker Hall, 882-5979



## Career Services

Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources Career Services.....	2-64 Agriculture Bldg., 882-0088
Business Career Services.....	104 Cornell Hall, 882-6898
Education Career & Program Support Services.....	218 Townsend Hall, 882-7772
Engineering Career Services.....	W1025 Engineering Bldg. E., 884-4487
Journalism Career Services.....	76 Gannett Hall, 882-4821
MU Career Center.....	Student Success Center, 882-6801

## Involvement and Leadership Opportunities

Center for Student Involvement.....	A022 Brady Commons, 882-3780
Greek Life.....	A022 Brady Commons, 882-8291
Leadership Development Program.....	A022 Brady Commons, 882-1815
Missouri Students Association.....	A022 Brady Commons, 882-5522
MSA/GPC Box Office.....	Brady Commons Mall, 882-4640
MSA/GPC Craft Studio & Darkroom.....	203 Brady Commons, 882-2889
MU Alternative Spring Break.....	A022 Brady Commons, 882-1743
Office of Community Involvement.....	A022 Brady Commons, 882-8291
Residence Hall Association.....	A022 Brady Commons, 882-7615
Student Life.....	A02 Brady Commons, 882-3621



## Student Support

Black Culture Center.....	813 Virginia Ave., 882-2664
Gay-Lesbian-Bisexual-Transgender Resource Center.....	230 Brady Commons, 884-7750
International Center.....	N52 Memorial Union, 882-6007
Office of Multicultural Affairs.....	A037 Brady Commons, 882-7152
Women's Center.....	229 Brady Commons, 882-6621

## Health and Wellness

Counseling Center.....	119 Parker Hall, 882-6601
MU Recreation Services.....	320 Student Recreation Center, 882-2067
Student Health Center.....	University Physicians Medical Bldg., 882-7481
Wellness Resource Center.....	34 Brady Commons, 882-4634

