

Choose the Right Major



. . . for You!



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The process of choosing a major can be a bit confusing at times. This workbook has been designed to guide you, the SF State student, through the various steps of the decision making process so you can make a well-informed choice.

If you have any suggestions or feed back please email them to the Career Center at careerct@sfsu.edu with Major Workbook in the subject line.

Good luck and have fun!

The Career Center

My Next Steps

1. Fill out **Examine the Major** worksheets

2.

3.

4.

Network

Networking—meeting people who can provide information and guidance in your major/career choice—is one of the best activities to engage in when exploring majors and careers. Talking with professors, student advisors, and professionals in your areas of interest provides immediate feedback while also prompting further questions. Continually seek opportunities to learn from those who can speak from personal experience.

Informational Interviews

Informational interviews allow you to gather information about a specific occupation or field you are interested in learning more about. Professors, friends, family members, co-workers, supervisors, and acquaintances can all be resources for people to talk with. Initial contact may be an email or a phone call. When you make your initial contact let them know you are interested in finding out more about their career and would like to speak with them for about 20 minutes.

Prepare a list of questions

- What is involved in a typical day on your job?
- How did you get into this position/field?
- What advice would you give to someone who wants to do this kind of work?
- What are the job titles for entry-level positions? Salary ranges?
- Could you refer me to someone else knowledgeable in the field?

Take Notes

- Don't be afraid to take notes during the informational interview. Make sure to take down the names of contacts, organizations, associations and next steps your interviewee suggests.

Be Courteous

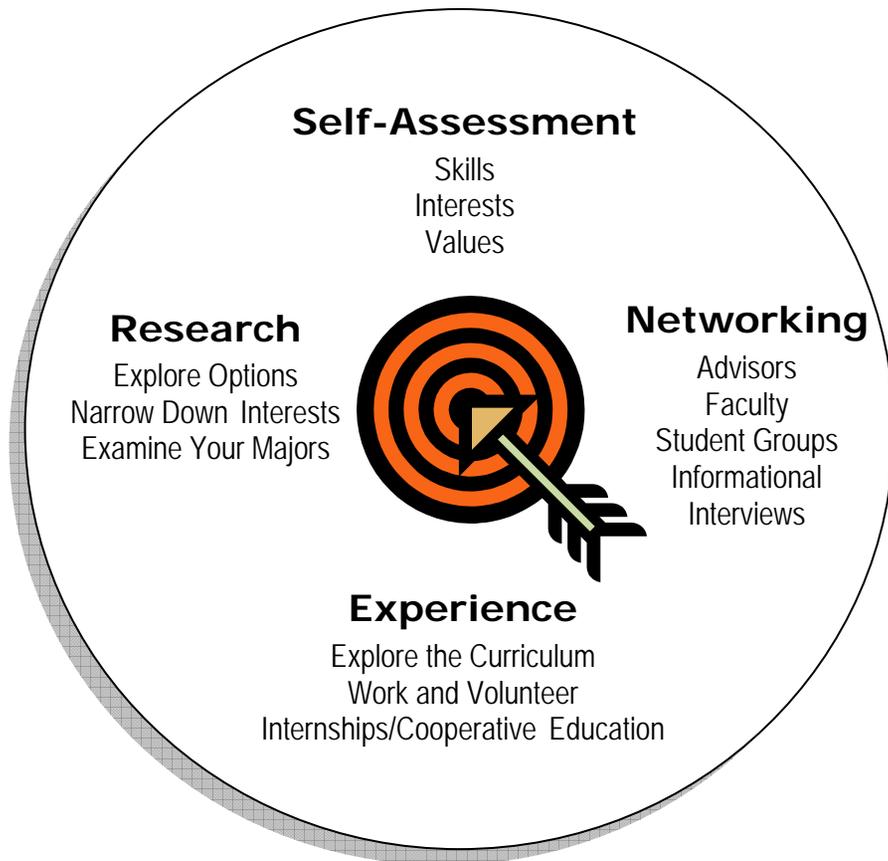
- Be prompt to the interview
- Avoid personal questions, like “How much money do you make?”
- Send a thank you note to express your appreciation for the person's time.

Table of Contents

FOUR STEPS TO FINDING A MAJOR.....	4
SELF-ASSESSMENT.....	5
IDENTIFY YOUR SKILLS.....	7
IDENTIFY YOUR VALUES.....	9
IDENTIFY YOUR INTERESTS.....	10
NARROW DOWN YOUR SEARCH.....	11
SF STATE UNDERGRADUATE MAJORS.....	11
SUMMARY WORKSHEET.....	13
EXAMINE THE MAJOR.....	14
GET EXPERIENCE.....	17
NETWORK.....	18

This workbook was adapted from Choose a Major Workbook, California State University, Hayward.

Four Steps to Finding a Major



Get Experience

There are a number of on-the-job opportunities that will help you understand how your major relates to various careers. Major-related experience during college can help you to:

- Investigate majors as well as their associated careers
- Graduate with career-related experience
- Earn academic units and/or money
- Make contacts in the field that can eventually become job leads

Consider These Options

Volunteer

Volunteering for a few hours a week is a great way to 'test the waters' of various careers. Typically you can volunteer for as little or as many hours as you would like so your experience can fit around work and school. You will have the opportunity to talk with professionals and develop relationships (and possible future job leads) that you wouldn't have if you had solely focused on taking classes.

Take a Class

Don't forget to take advantage of choosing classes that help you explore majors you are interested in. SF State students have 48 GE units to complete before they start their major core classes – those are a lot of units that allow you to choose classes related to majors of interest!

Internships

Internships provide students an opportunity to gain experience in a work environment while earning units toward graduation. Students typically participate in internships once they have chosen a major and want to explore careers related to the specific major. Internship opportunities can be found at:

Career Center – Student Services Building Room 206

Community Involvement Center (CIC) – Humanities 135

Institute for Civic and Community Involvement:

<http://www.sfsu.edu/~icce/resources/student/internships.html>

Various Major Departments -- See your major department for available internship classes

Cooperative Education

Cooperative Education gives SFSU students get an opportunity to apply classroom knowledge to real-world work situations. The student gets the best of all worlds -- paid work experience with great employers, academic credit, and a taste of their chosen career. See <http://www.sfsu.edu/~cooped/>, or Science Building 248, for more information.

Examine the Major

Circle the number that best describes how you feel about each statement, in regard to the major you are exploring. Total the numbers you have circled and enter the number in the **Total Score** area at the bottom of the page. A high score indicates that this major might be a good match for you.

What if I majored in . . . _____

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
15. The materials (textbooks, art supplies, computers, etc.) used in the major are interesting	5	4	3	2	1	0
16. The activities (homework, assignments, labs, projects) required in the major are interesting	5	4	3	2	1	0
17. I may enjoy taking a course in this major	5	4	3	2	1	0
18. I may enjoy the prerequisite courses for this major	5	4	3	2	1	0
19. I have been successful in courses related to the major	5	4	3	2	1	0
20. I have skills needed to advance in the major (i.e. good math skills for Business)	5	4	3	2	1	0
21. My values and interests fit well with the major	5	4	3	2	1	0
Total Score: _____						

Self-Assessment

Knowing yourself—your **SKILLS, VALUES,** and **INTERESTS**—are important when exploring majors. Read the questions below and write down a response for each one. Discuss your thoughts with friends, family, and an advisor (Advising Center, Career Center, EOP, etc). These questions are a good way to get you started in your self-exploration.

Activities and Interests

- What kind of activities did you do in high school? What activities made you excited?
- What are your hobbies?

Education

- What kind of classes did you enjoy in high school? (PE; English; Math/Science; Social Science (Economics, Anthropology); Business; Not really any one kind of class).
- Are you a hands-on learner, or enjoy listening to lectures and taking notes, or both?
- Do you love the idea of going to a science lab? Or writing a research paper?
- Is your academic record an accurate measure of your ability and potential?

Self-Assessment

Goals and Values

- How do you define success?

- How do you see your life five years from now?

- Rank these 1-4, 1 being the most important and 4 being not as important : Money; Family; Security; Time/Freedom. Why did you rank them the way you did?

Your Personal World

- What do your parents and friends expect of you in life?

- How have other's expectations influenced your goals and standards?

Examine the Major

Circle the number that best describes how you feel about each statement, in regard to the major you are exploring. Total the numbers you have circled and enter the number in the **Total Score** area at the bottom of the page. A high score indicates that this major might be a good match for you.

What if I majored in . . . _____

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
8. The materials (textbooks, art supplies, computers, etc.) used in the major are interesting	5	4	3	2	1	0
9. The activities (homework, assignments, labs, projects) required in the major are interesting	5	4	3	2	1	0
10. I may enjoy taking a course in this major	5	4	3	2	1	0
11. I may enjoy the prerequisite courses for this major	5	4	3	2	1	0
12. I have been successful in courses related to the major	5	4	3	2	1	0
13. I have skills needed to advance in the major (i.e. good math skills for Business)	5	4	3	2	1	0
14. My values and interests fit well with the major	5	4	3	2	1	0
Total Score: _____						

Examine the Major

Circle the number that best describes how you feel about each statement, in regard to the major you are exploring. Total the numbers you have circled and enter the number in the **Total Score** area at the bottom of the page. A high score indicates that this major might be a good match for you.

What if I majored in . . . _____

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
1. The materials (textbooks, art supplies, computers, etc.) used in the major are interesting	5	4	3	2	1	0
2. The activities (homework, assignments, labs, projects) required in the major are interesting	5	4	3	2	1	0
3. I may enjoy taking a course in this major	5	4	3	2	1	0
4. I may enjoy the prerequisite courses for this major	5	4	3	2	1	0
5. I have been successful in courses related to the major	5	4	3	2	1	0
6. I have skills needed to advance in the major (i.e. good math skills for Business)	5	4	3	2	1	0
7. My values and interests fit well with the major	5	4	3	2	1	0
Total Score: _____						

Self-Assessment: Identify Your Skills

Step I

- Circle all the skills below you have used at least once in your life (work, school, hobby, etc).
- Next, put a star (★) next to the circled skills you might enjoy using in your major.

Communication

write
edit
summarize
verbal communication
listen
facilitate discussion
consult
teach
train
sell
promote
use languages
interview
ask questions
make presentations
negotiate
think on one's feet
conversational ability
entertain, perform
host
deal with public
public speaking
teamwork

Information Management

math skills
organize information
manage information
keep records
attend to details
logical ability
develop systems
categorize
summarize
streamline systems
monitor

Organization Management

solve problems
time management
make decisions
lead
meet deadlines
supervise
motivate
recruit
resolve conflicts
mediate
initiate projects
organize
coordinate
handle logistics
put theory into practice
delegate
give directions
assume responsibility
determine policy
interpret policy
apply policy
set priorities
strategize

Design & Planning

anticipate problems
plan
conceptualize
design
display
layout/format
design programs
anticipate consequences
brainstorm new ideas
think visually
improvise
compose
adapt
create images

Research & Investigation

analyze ideas
analyze data
research
investigate
read for information
interview for information
gather data
evaluate
critical thinking
synthesize information
observe
outline
formulate hypotheses
develop theory
calculate/compare

Human Service

interpersonal skills
group process
sensitivity to needs
empathize
counsel
advocate
use intuition
coach
provide care

Physical

build
construct
invent
operate equipment
repair
restore
use physical coordination

Adapted from Stanford University Career Center (<http://cardinalcareers.stanford.edu/start/assessments/>)

Self-Assessment: Identify Your Skills

Step II

Use the questions below to brainstorm about the various skills you might have. Put a star (★) next to any skills you think you would enjoy using in your major.

- In the jobs you have worked, what skills did you demonstrate that impressed your employer? (communication, teamwork, intrapersonal, analytical, etc.)

- What talents and skills have you been recognized for? (Include accomplishments, awards, trophies, praise by your parents and teachers.)

- Think about the subjects that were easiest for you in grade school. What skills do you have that allowed you to succeed in these subjects?

- Think about the hobbies you really enjoy (cooking, craftwork, web site design). What skill set do you use in these activities?

- What do your friends say you are good at?

Step III

Review by choosing 10 (★) skills from the previous page and the questions above. Record them on your **Summary Sheet**, Page 13, in the section entitled **SKILLS**.

SUMMARY WORKSHEET

TRUE COLORS

First Color _____
Second Color _____
Third Color _____
Fourth Color _____

Top 5 Color Traits

VALUES

Majors To Explore

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Minors To Explore

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

SKILLS



Bachelor of Arts (cont.)

Environmental Studies
 Concentrations in:
 Environmental
 Sustainability and
 Social Justice
 Humanities and the
 Environment
 The Urban
 Environment
 Family and Consumer
 Sciences
 French
 Geography
 German
 History
 Concentration in
 Honors Program
 Humanities
 Industrial Arts
 Concentrations in:
 Product Design and
 Development
 Visual Communication
 Design
 International Relations
 Italian
 Japanese
 Journalism
 Labor Studies
 Liberal Studies
 Mathematics
 Concentrations in:
 Mathematics for
 Advanced Studies
 Mathematics for
 Liberal Arts
 Mathematics for
 Teaching
 Modern Jewish Studies
 Music
 Philosophy
 Philosophy and Religion
 Physics
 Concentration in
 Astronomy

Political Science
 Psychology
 Radio and Television
 Raza Studies
 Recreation
 Social Work
 Sociology
 Spanish
 Special Major
 Technical and Professional
 Writing
 Urban Studies
 Women Studies

Bachelor of Music

Bachelor of Science

Apparel Design and
 Merchandising
 Applied Mathematics
 Atmospheric and Oceanic
 Sciences
 Concentrations in:
 Meteorology
 Oceanography
 Biochemistry
 Biology
 Concentrations in:
 Botany
 Cell and Molecular
 Biology
 Ecology
 Marine Biology and
 Limnology
 Microbiology
 Physiology
 Zoology
 Business Administration
 Concentrations in:
 Accounting
 Corporate Finance
 Decision Sciences
 Electronic Commerce
 Systems

Entrepreneurial/Small
 Business
 Management
 Financial Services
 Information Systems
 International Business
 Management
 Marketing
 Chemistry
 Clinical Science
 Computer Science
 Dietetics
 Engineering, Civil
 Engineering, Computer
 Engineering, Electrical
 Engineering, Mechanical
 Environmental Studies
 Concentrations in:
 Earth System Science
 Natural Resource
 Management and
 Conservation
 Geology
 Health Education
 Hospitality Management
 Concentrations in:
 Commercial
 Recreation and
 Resort Management
 Hotel Management
 Restaurant and
 Institutional
 Foodservice
 Management
 Industrial Technology
 Interior Design
 Kinesiology
 Concentrations in:
 Exercise and
 Movement Sciences
 Physical Education
 Nursing
 Physics
 Concentration in
 Astrophysics
 Statistics

Self-Assessment: Identify Your Values

Step I

- Review the table below and make a mark under the appropriate column to show how important each value is in your life.

Step II

- Circle your top 10 values from your **Most Important** and **Important** columns.
- Rank these top 10 values in the far left column, from most important (1) to least important (10), using each number only once.
- Record your top 5 values on the **Summary Sheet**, Page 13, in the **VALUES** section.

My Top Ten Values	Value	Most Important	Important	Not So Important	Not Important At All
	Exploring	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Power	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Contributing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Knowledge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Independence	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Leadership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Security	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Challenge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Curiosity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Variety	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Time Freedom	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Creativity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Individuality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Growth	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Excitement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Spirituality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Integrity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Honesty	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Humor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Recognition	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Wisdom	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Friendship	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Wealth	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Self-Assessment: Identify Your Interests

True Colors is a quick online exercise that will help you understand your personality traits, including interests, by exploring four different color profiles—Gold, Blue, Orange and Green.

Step I

- Go to <http://www.eureka.org/index.html>
- Click on **Sign Up** located below **NEW TO EUREKA.ORG?**
- Enter the Site Code number **UW2BEH6**
- Complete the personal information form
- Choose a log-in name and password
- Click on the phrase **Click Here to Log into Eureka**
- Enter your user name and password
- Click the **Submit** button and enter the Eureka.org website

Step II



- Click on the  logo, under the yellow Self-Assessment tab, and complete the assessment.

Step III

- Record your top three True Colors (Orange, Blue, Gold, or Green) in the chart below.
- Read the description for each of your top three colors on the assessment website and write down any traits or phrases that sound like you below each color.
- Record your answers on the **Summary Sheet**, page 13, in the section entitled **TRUE COLORS**.

First Color	Second Color	Third Color
_____	_____	_____
Top Color Traits	Top Color Traits	Top Color Traits
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Narrow Down Your Search

Now that you have evaluated your **SKILLS**, **VALUES**, and **INTERESTS**, let's take some time to evaluate what you know about the majors at SF State. After this exercise you will have enough information to start selecting majors to explore.

Part I

- Read through the **SF State Undergraduate Majors** list on Page 11 and 12.
- Cross out all the majors you **KNOW** you don't want to declare.
- Circle all the majors that sound interesting, but you don't know much about.
- Put a star (★) next to the majors that are left. These should be majors you know a bit about and have an interest exploring.
- Go to the SF State Bulletin (which can be purchased at the bookstore or accessed on line at: <http://www.sfsu.edu/-bulletin/current/bull-tc.htm>) and read through the course requirements and career outlook descriptions of the majors that you circled (those majors that sound interesting, but you don't know much about). When you identify a major you want to explore put a star (★) next to the major in the SF State Undergraduate Majors list.

Part II

- Choose three possible majors and, if desired, three possible minors, from your (★) majors in your SF State Undergraduate Majors list, Page 11 and 12.
- Go to the **Summary Worksheet**, Page 13, and enter three majors into the **Majors to Explore** section and three minors in the **Minors to Explore** section.
- Go on to the **Examine the Major** section, Page 14, to start exploring your chosen majors and minors.

SF State Undergraduate Majors

Bachelor of Arts	Youth and Family Services	Economics
Africana Studies	Research and Public Policy	English
American Studies	Chinese	Concentrations in:
Anthropology	Cinema	Creative Writing
Art	Classics	Individual Major
Asian American Studies	Communication Studies	Language Studies
Biology	Communicative Disorders	Literature
Chemistry	Comparative Literature	
Child and Adolescent Development	Criminal Justice Studies	
Concentrations in:	Dance	
Young Child and Family	Drama	
School-age Child and Family	Earth Sciences	