

Major & Career Discernment

You have already started and are continually engaging in the career development process. This process is not limited to your college years - it is something that will continue throughout your lifetime. Key elements to help college students engage in the process are: figure out who you are (values, interests, personality, and skills), study what you enjoy/get involved, explore careers, reflect and take action.

Career Development Model

This diagram serves as a visual guide for understanding the steps we encourage you to take in your major and career discernment. It is a dynamic process with movement back and forth between stages, though we suggest beginning with building self-awareness.

Whenever considering a career change, employ the same steps of assessing, exploring, reflecting, and taking action! The details may differ but the process is essentially the same. Learning this process as a student is a valuable lifelong tool.

Figure Out Who You Are

In order to choose a major or career path you must know yourself. Knowing yourself entails identifying Values, Interests, Personality, and Skills (VIPS). To achieve long term career satisfaction it is important to implement all four VIPS in your future career. Personal experiences help to identify and learn more about your VIPS. Think about everything you've done to this point (classes, activities, jobs, service, etc.) as you complete the inventories suggested in "Tools to Use."



ACTION STEPS

- Meet with your advisor to explore resources and services on campus.
- Become involved in extracurricular activities for personal and professional development.
- Learn about the Meruelo Family Center for Career Development and review the information on Major & Career Discernment on our website.
- Make an appointment with a Career Counselor on Handshake.
- Assess your values, interests, personality, and skills through self-assessment tools, workshops, and appointments with a Career Counselor.

TOOLS TO USE

- 7 Clues: A Career Assessment Activity
- Values:** Prioritizing Your Values and Work Values
- Interests:** Achievements Inventory, Interest Inventory
- Skills:** Skills Assessment Inventory and Application; Achievements Inventory



ONLINE ASSESSMENTS

Interactive assessment activities available online at undergradcareers.nd.edu/assessments.

Study What You Enjoy and Get Involved

Your major does not define your career path! You will be more motivated to attend class if you are interested in what you are studying. Engage on campus, and remember experiences help to better understand your values, interests, personality, and skills (VIPS).

ACTION STEPS

- Get to know faculty in departments under consideration—attend a professor's office hours
- Speak with juniors and seniors in majors you are considering.
- Attend the "Majors Fair" during the Fall semester.
- Review course descriptions and requirements for majors/minors
- Attend Activities Night in early September and find a club or two to join. In particular, seek out academic and career-related clubs.
- Understand how skills obtained in the classroom are transferable to the "real world"

Explore

Research careers related to what you have learned about yourself.

ACTION STEPS

- Research industries/career paths
- Compare VIPS to career paths
- Conduct informational interviews with family, friends, faculty, juniors/seniors in your major, and alumni
- Seek opportunities on campus to learn about/become involved in majors/clubs/service
- Engage with employers and organizations on campus
- Attend Career Fairs, Info Sessions, and panel talks for the areas in which you're interested*



TOOLS TO USE

- What Can I Do With This Major?*
- ND Course Bulletin and Departmental Websites*
- Student Activities Website
- First Destination Data on our website

*For detailed information visit undergradcareers.nd.edu/tools

TOOLS TO USE

- Candid Career, Vault, What Can I Do With This Major*
- O*Net, Occupational Outlook Handbook*
- IrishCompass, Alumni Website (my.nd.edu), LinkedIn*
- Success Stories & Data (First Destination Report)*

*For detailed information visit undergradcareers.nd.edu/tools



Reflecting and Taking Action

Reflecting throughout this process is a critical component of the cycle. Every experience shapes you in some way, whether you realize it or not. Taking some time to slow down and think about how experiences and activities have affected you will be immensely helpful. No one can tell you what to major in or what career to pursue (although some will try). It's up to you to be an active participant in your career journey and in your decisions!

7 Clues: A Career Assessment Activity

Learning your own unique pattern of interests, motivation, satisfaction and meaning is an important first step in career development. Answer the 7 following questions to get started.

What classes fascinate you?

What are your dream job(s)?

What do you naturally do well?

What local, societal, or world issues interest you?



What is the most gratifying thing you've ever done? What experiences turned out to be most dissatisfying to you?

If you knew you couldn't fail, what would you do?

What's something you are doing when you lose track of time?
