



Academic Exploration Guidebook

Developed by Academic Excellence Programs

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Welcome

The University of Tampa wants all students to find success through a major that sparks your interests, furthers your understanding and provides top quality academic preparation for a variety of paths after graduation. Your time in college is exciting! From making friends from around the world to connecting with expert faculty members, to engaging in leadership and service learning to completing internships, this time in your life provides countless valuable opportunities. We understand that choosing an academic path can be challenging and may cause stress and anxiety, so please know that you are not alone in this process. In this Guidebook, you'll find a variety of activities and resources from the UT Academic Exploration Program to support your decision making. This is an important process that deserves time, so use the following resources to assist you in designing an individual path to success.

According to *USA Today* in 2015, 80% of college students changed their major at least once during college, so if you are questioning what path might be best for you, realize that many people at UT can help you make this important decision during all stages of your personal exploration process.

This Academic Exploration Guidebook is designed to:

- Help facilitate your understanding of your interests, skills, values and academic options.
- Connect your passions and interests with the over 200 academic programs at UT.
- Serve as a tool to explore yourself and how various majors may lead you to find academic success.

There is no single "right" way to make this decision, so please use all of the UT resources to aid in your decision. When choosing a major, think of the overall value rather than simply focusing on one career goal. What do you want to study and where can that in-depth academic understanding lead you? We encourage students to choose a major that includes classes you look forward to engaging in to further your overall understanding of the discipline. Also, at UT, many academic paths allow you to double major or minor in other subjects to fulfill all of your academic goals.

The Academic Exploration Program within the Academic Success Center provides support to students who are questioning what major to choose, considering changing majors or looking for ways to maximize their overall educational experience through major, minor and course choices. The Academic Exploration staff understand that this process is unique to each student, so if you have any questions, please email aep@ut.edu or call 813-257-5757 for personal assistance.

You are the only person who can decide what major will be best for you. There is no "right" major that guarantees success more than others. Look for majors with classes you want to take. You will spend the next few years of your life committed to this discipline, and students who enjoy their classes often report greater success. If you have questions, do not hesitate to contact the Academic Excellence Programs staff for guidance and individualized assistance in your process.

We wish you luck as you begin this journey!



Academic Exploration Program Resources

UT offers a variety of resources for students to explore, get assistance and maximize their academic experience. You are invited to participate in all opportunities to ensure you find the right major for you.

Individualized Exploratory Advising: The Exploration Specialist helps students discover academic interests and identify strengths as they consider their degree options at UT. Through one-on-one personalized exploration, students work toward declaring a "best fit" major while still ensuring a timely graduation. These appointments provide targeted assistance for students who wish to talk with a professional staff member to overcome the questions and challenges facing students who are unsure. If you're a first-year student, you can talk with your Academic Advisor about Exploration too.

Exploration-Themed Academic Skills Course: Staff within Academic Excellence Programs teach Academic Skills courses (ASK 100) each semester to prepare students to be successful in all aspects of the collegiate environment. In addition to developing motivation, study skills and time management systems, the exploration-themed Academic Skills course, taught by the Exploration Specialist, includes information to help students explore UT's major options. Through a combination of reflective exercises and in-person meetings, students in this course obtain information used to develop an action plan to help them discover and declare a major that best matches their interests, passions and academic skills.

Exploration Workshops and Events: Academic Excellence Programs hosts various workshops and events that focus on identifying interests and strengths, exploring possible majors, making decisions and highlighting how majors connect to career options. These events are often in collaboration with Career Services to emphasize both major and career exploration, assisting students in understanding their holistic opportunities at UT that connect to life beyond graduation.

Majors Fair: This specialized annual resource fair allows students to broaden their knowledge of the major and minor degree programs at UT. Students are able to meet faculty, staff, student and alumni representatives from across UT's academic departments to engage in conversations about options for majors and requirements for each specific academic offering. This event is a collaboration between Academic Excellence Programs and Career Services to unite major and career exploration.

Blackboard Exploration Organization: All undecided (NTI) students are automatically enrolled in an Academic Exploration Program organization on Blackboard. This provides a variety of tools and resources to further assist in declaring a major. Any student who is interested in this organization can add it in their own Blackboard to have access to the resources at any time.

Exploration Coaching: Academic Excellence Programs offers Coaching for Student Success where students provide a peer-to-peer connection to assist in exploring majors, succeeding within classes and progressing within their own academic plan. Exploratory students can elect to participate in this program where they will meet with a coach specifically trained to support them in their exploration.

Exploration Guides: Understanding that students like to hear from other students, exploratory students have the opportunity to connect with juniors and seniors who are passionate about their majors in a relaxed and friendly environment. Students can receive a firsthand look at what it is like to be a student in a particular major and learn how their Guide has made the most of their major at UT.

UT Major Options

The University of Tampa offers over 200 academic programs of study as undergraduate degrees, minors, pre-professional programs and certificates. All undergraduate majors fall within one of four Colleges. Use this list to begin considering potential majors and minors.

College of Arts and Letters

Advertising and Public Relations

Applied Dance

Art

Communication

Digital Arts

English

Film and Media Arts

Graphic Design

Journalism

Music

Music Education K-12

Music Performance

Musical Theatre

New Media Production

Painting

Spanish

Theatre

Sykes College of Business

Accounting

Cybersecurity

Economics

Entrepreneurship

Finance

Financial Enterprise Systems

International Business

Management

Management Information Systems

Marketing

College of Natural and Health Sciences

Allied Health

Athletic Training

Biology

Chemistry

Environmental Science

Forensic Science

Human Performance

Marine Science - Biology

Marine Science - Chemistry

Nursing

Physics

Physical Education K-12 Teaching

Public Health

Sport Management

College of Social Sciences, Mathematics and Education

Criminology

Education (Elementary K-6)

Education (Physical Education K-12)

Education (Secondary Biology)

Education (Secondary English)

Education (Secondary Mathematics)

Education (Secondary Social Science)

History

International Studies

Mathematical Programming

Mathematics

Philosophy

Political Science

Psychology

Sociology



Exploring Majors

Adapted from "Choosing Your Major" by Mary Lou-Taylor

Step 1: Assess & discover yourself

- What do you like to do on the weekend?
- What do you like to learn about?
- What motivates you?
- What could you not live without?
- How would you like to spend each day?

Step 2: Gather information and explore options

- In the UT catalog, what courses sound most interesting?
- What majors do your friends have that you might/might not enjoy?
- Have you talked with any faculty about what majors include?
- Have you taken Baccalaureate Experience courses that interest you?

Step 3: Evaluate and make your decision

- What are the pros and cons of your potential majors?
- With each major, how many credits does it require?
- Do you have enough remaining credits to add a major or minor?
- What jobs might you be interested in related to each major?

Step 4: Take action

- If you want assistance with choosing a major, make an appointment with the Exploration Specialist by visiting https://www.ut.edu/aep/exploration/.
- If you want assistance exploring potential jobs and careers, make an appointment with Career Services by visiting https://www.ut.edu/career/exploration/.
- If you're ready to declare a major, do it! Visit the Academic Success Center to submit your Change of Major form: https://www.ut.edu/academicadvising/changemajor/.

There are many factors that might affect you during these steps such as too little or too much information, anxiety about your choice, or conflicting opinions with people in your life about the value of certain majors. As you progress through each step, use the following exercises to help clarify your feelings, strengths and goals. If you need personal assistance at any point, use the information in Step 4 to connect to campus resources.



Beginning Personal Reflection

I am undecided about a major because: (Check all that apply)

To begin this process, you need to consider why you are undecided and what steps you have/have not taken thus far to explore majors. Beginning with these steps will help identify where you should go next to explore on your own timeline.

	I don't have enough information about various majors. I don't have enough information about possible career fields to which majors may lead. I'm not sure about my ability to succeed in the coursework for certain majors. I have so many interests that I can't narrow my options. I don't have strong interests in anything, so I'm not sure where to begin exploring. I'm not sure of my values, so I don't know what is important to me in a major. I'm afraid to choose a major because it might be the wrong decision. I'm not sure what jobs will be available to me if I graduate with a certain major. I have difficulty making decisions in general. I don't want to disappoint people in my life by choosing a major they don't support. Other people have suggested majors, but I'm not sure they are right for me. Other reasons (be specific):
HOW	UNDECIDED ARE YOU?
	ake a moment to consider just how undecided you are about a major, and then check the statement est applies to your current status.
	I have no idea what to major in. I have some ideas, but I am interested in too many areas to decide. I have an idea, but I need more information about it first. I have an idea, but I want to explore my options first. I'm currently in a major, and I might want to change, so I want to explore other areas first. I know what I want to major in, but I am not ready to declare. Other:
	checked any of the statements expressing that you have some idea or interest, in what areas are terested? Why are these of interest to you?



DISCOVER YOUR FEELINGS

	ions plays an important role in how you approach the process of ow about choosing/changing your major?
☐ Anxious ☐ Confused ☐ Dejected ☐ Disappointed ☐ Excited ☐ Fearful ☐ Frustrated ☐ Happy ☐ Numb ☐ Pressured ☐ Relaxed ☐ Stressed How do these feelings affect your major? (Example: When I feel stressed)	tivation for engaging in the activities that will help you to choose a ed, it is difficult for me to)
• •	hat most students do not make major decisions without talking to ple you can talk to about your decision? List people who you plan to bloration process:
1	2
3	4

Now that you've begun your personal reflection to consider why you are undecided, how you currently feel about making major decisions and who in your life may assist in this process, you are ready to complete the following self-assessment exercises to clarify your strengths, values, interests, and academic options. This information will provide themes that combine to assist in choosing a major. You do not have to complete all of the exercises; simply choose what you see as most beneficial for you.



Skills Assessment

For many students, considering what you excel in is a good place to begin exploring potential majors. We understand that many students have had limited opportunities to take classes in all of our academic disciplines, so rather than only focusing on classes, use the following exercises to explore your skill areas.

ASSESS YOUR ABILITIES

Rate yourself in the following skill categories. Some of the areas might not be things you've previously considered, so take your time when answering. Be honest, and use your best estimate for each answer.

	Strong Ability	Some Ability	No Ability
VERBAL/PERSUASIVE:			
Writing: Express yourself in written forms of communication.			
Talking: Relate easily to people in conversational settings.			
Public speaking: Deliver a talk or address an audience.			
Persuading/Influencing: Convince others to believe			
something you believe or want something you're selling.			
Dramatics: Portray ideas or stories in a dramatic format.			
SOCIAL:			
Social ease: Relate easily with others in social situations.			
Customer service: Relate effectively with a variety of people			
who need information, service or help.			
Accepting negative feedback: Able to cope with criticism.			
NUMERICAL:			
Working with numerical data: Comfortable with large			
amounts of quantitative data and compiling, interpreting and			
presenting data.			
Computer use: Use computers to solve quantitative problems,			
have knowledge of programming, computer capabilities, etc.			
INVESTIGATIVE:			
Scientific curiosity: Learn about scientific phenomena and			
investigate events which may lead to such knowledge.			
Research: Gather and organize information for a particular			
field of knowledge to establish certain facts or principles.			
Technical work: Work easily with practical, mechanical or			
industrial aspects of a particular science, profession or craft.			
MANUAL-PHYSICAL:			
Mechanical reasoning: Understand the way machinery or			
operates and the relationship between mechanical operations.			
Manual dexterity: Skilled in using your hands.			
Spatial perception: Judge the relationship of objects in space			
and visualize putting them together to create something.			



	Strong Ability	Some Ability	No Ability
CREATIVE:			
Artistic or Musical: Keenly sensitive to aesthetic values; able			
to create works of art or perform music.			
Imaginative with things: Create new ideas and forms with			
various physical objects.			
Imaginative with ideas: Create new ideas and programs			
through conceptualizing existing elements in new ways; able			
to merge abstract ideas.			
Entertaining/Performing: Perform in front of an audience.			
WORKING WITH OTHERS:			
Supervising: Oversee, manage or direct work of others.			
Teaching/Training: Help others learn how to do or			
understand something; able to provide knowledge or insight.			
Coaching: Instruct or train an individual to improve			
performance in a specific area.			
Advising/Counseling: Engage in a direct helping relationship			
with another through listening and giving advice.			
MANAGERIAL:			
Organization and planning: Develop a program or project by			
preparing and arranging tasks systematically, coordinating the			
people and resources necessary to put a plan into effect.			
Orderliness: Arrange items in a systematic fashion so that			
information can be readily used or retrieved.			
Handling Details : Able to work efficiently with a great variety			
and/or volume of information.			
Making Decisions: Comfortable in reaching conclusions about			
matters which require specific action; able to accept			
responsibility for the consequences of such actions.			
Now look back at the entire list above. Are there other skills the been included? Overall, what are your top skills? When answering this, first lo			ive not

Skills are one aspect of self-assessment that can lead you toward major options. If you would like to connect skills with potential majors, make an appointment with the Exploration Specialist.

connections to possible majors or career interests, note that as you list the skills.



Values Assessment

Recognizing your values is an important part in your major exploration process. Values refer to the priorities you have for your life – in other words, what is most important to you. Many students are unaware of their core values; others experience a situation in which their core values are not aligned with their academic/career path (i.e. a person values money and compensation but is drawn to a career in a lower-paying industry.) Being aware of your values may help you identify goals and potential majors.

DEFINING YOUR VALUES

Use the list below to help you identify those values that are most important to you. Keep in mind that your values may change as your work situations change, so it is important to evaluate your work values often. The questions will help you define what value means to you so you can connect that to careers.

The <u>core values</u> that are important to me in my life are:	Always Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Social service —is it important to you to contribute to the betterment of your community, country or world?			
Direct contact with people- do you enjoy working with people, either the public or collaboratively with coworkers?			
Solitary work environment —do you prefer to complete projects by yourself, without input from others?			
Relationships —is it important to you to develop personal contacts and friendships from work? Do you value time for close personal relationships outside work?			
Job pressure, pace, and stress —do you perform well under pressure? Do you enjoy a fast-paced environment?			
Power/Authority —do you like to make decisions, determine policies and guide the work of others?			
Influence —do you enjoy influencing and persuading others' attitudes and opinions?			
Knowledge —is the pursuit of knowledge and understanding of key importance to you?			
Expertise/Competence —is it important to become a subject area expert, with or without recognition?			
Creativity —do you enjoy creating new ideas, organizations, programs or works of art?			



The <u>core values</u> that are important to me in my life are:	Always Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
Aesthetics —is it important to you to be involved in the study or creation of beauty, culture, truth?			
Change and variety — do you prefer variety your work rather than work that is routine?			
Job stability and security —is it important that you hold a stable job for a long time with the assurance of continued employment at reasonable pay?			
Recognition and prestige —is it important that your achievements be acknowledged and respected by others?			
Challenging problems —do you enjoy problem solving? Is it important in your work?			
Opportunities for advancement —do you value the opportunity to rapidly advance in your career if you work hard?			
Excitement/Adventure/Risks —do you enjoy a high degree of excitement and risk taking in your work?			
Wealth from income —are you motivated by the potential of making a large amount of money?			
Independence —is it important to you to live and work within your own priorities?			
Moral fulfillment —is it important to feel your work is in accordance with, and perhaps even furthers, your moral beliefs?			
Physical work environment and work hours —is it ok if your work involves flexible hours rather than a strict 9-5? Do you mind working overtime? Can you adapt to a changing work schedule?			
Enjoyment —is it important to you that you derive a high level of personal satisfaction from your work?			
Location —is geographical location important to you and your family?			

What do these values mean in	n relation to your future aca	idemic, career and life priorities? Comp	
		d related career paths to see what best	



Interests Assessment

As you consider majors, take into account your interests. You may have thought about classes you would like to take, but for many students, connecting an area of academic study to interests you have results in a holistic experience that you enjoy. A major can expand past the classroom. Begin here with what you like.

INTERESTS CHECKLIST

How do you like to spend your time? Review the list below and check the activities that you enjoy doing.

Studying nature Being outdoors Decorating Collecting things Listening to music Traveling Playing with children Solving problems	Teaching others Exploring new places Supervising people Public speaking Using social media tools Conserving natural resources Drawing/painting Studying art		Budgeting/managing money Joining public causes Talking about politics Studying stocks/investments Analyzing data Science fiction Photography
Working with numbers Volunteering/charity work Working on cars/machines Meeting people Building things Studying languages Starting a business Designing websites Learning how things work Seeing Broadway shows Having philosophical discussions Dissecting an organism Playing team sports u see any patterns or themes emer nterests and potential majors? Wh	Organizing information/facts Working with animals Scientific research Studying the media Reading novels Analyzing movies/books/ TV shows Playing individual sports Selling things Writing research papers/ technical reports Doing science experiments Fundraising for causes Attending concerts gfrom what you chose? Do you see tands out overall?	any	Photography Writing poetry or stories Programming computers Observing human behavior Spiritual activities Acting/theater Hands-on activities Dancing Socializing Caring for the sick Giving advice Planning events Studying artifacts Singing Connections between

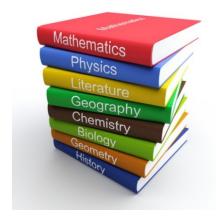


WHAT SUBJECTS DO YOU ENJOY?

Identifying classes you enjoyed most and classes you enjoyed least in high school and/or college can also provide you with information about your interests, natural abilities, skills and/or aptitudes. Keep in mind, there can be exceptions. For example, some students may not thoroughly enjoy an introductory Writing class, but they may spark a passion for the subject after having opportunities to write about subjects they enjoy. In addition, many times students acquire interests for subjects later in their college career as a result of a particular instructor or through their own personal growth.

Take a moment to reflect upon the subjects or classes that you have completed both in high school and in college up to this point. Think about which courses you really enjoyed taking and those in which you found an interest.

What courses did you like most? What was it about each course that you enjoyed?
Next, think about how you would rate your abilities in those subject areas from 1-10 (10 being the highest). Are there any subjects or courses in which you need to improve upon your skills and abilities in order to be successful? Are there others in which you excel?
Do you remember any assignments, projects or research you did in school that were interesting to you? How do classes and/or projects you enjoyed relate to ideas you have now about your choice of major?





Decision Making

After completing the previous assessments, use this decision making process to help you choose a major. You may be having trouble organizing all of the information you have collected, so this process may help you look objectively at your options and decide which major is the best fit for you.

- 1. Based on what you have discovered so far, select the top 3-5 majors that you would like to choose from. List the majors in the first row of your table. Think about what majors you see as most interesting and most valuable. Try to complete this section based on what you see as right for you.
- 2. Now create a 1-10 grading scale for each criterion detailing what constitutes the most negative and positive aspects of each major for you. You can go back to the previous exercises to help you complete of the rows.
- 3. Using the 1-10 grading scale, rate your options (one at a time) for each of the criteria.
- 4. Add the scores for each option and record it in the "total" column. The option with the highest total score is what you see as your best option.

Potential Major	Interest Level	Matches Skills	Fits Values	Career Possibilities	TOTAL
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
	1=extremely boring	1= extremely difficult	1=not fulfilling 10=very	1=not satisfied with possibilities	
	10=love it	10= so easy	fulfilling	10=satisfied with possibilities	



Use the information in the previous exercise about your potential major(s) to complete your decision making process. You may have to refer to the UT website and current catalog to help you answer the following questions. If you have more than one major you are considering, complete this portion for each separate major.
Major(s):
What UT College is this major included in? What classes does it include?
Is this an academic discipline you will enjoy studying over the next few years? Why?
Which classes do you think will be most and least challenging for you? Why?
Are there GPA or other requirements to be accepted into this major or to progress through the courses?
Do you believe you can meet these requirements? Yes No
Can this major be completed on your current graduation timeline? Yes No What kinds of jobs do UT students in this major pursue?
Name up to four of these jobs that would be of interest to you.
Does this major require an internship? Does the department list resources for obtaining an internship?
With all you know about this major, will you continue to consider it? Why or why not?



Evaluating Your Decision

Major:

Use this worksheet to help you determine whether you have considered all the important factors in choosing a major. Listed below are the common factors students consider. Read each statement and check off whether you agree or disagree if it applies to you. You should agree with the majority of the statements on this list. The statements that you disagree with may be areas that you need to consider further before you make your final choice of a major.

Minor (if applicable):

	Agree	Disagree	N/A
I know why I want to study this major.			
I am interested enough to study this subject on a more intensive level.			
I understand the course requirements, electives, etc. required for this degree.			
I am prepared for the workload required by this major.			
I am interested enough in this subject area to be motivated to connect with faculty members in this department.			
I have the academic skills needed to successfully complete this degree.			
I meet the academic requirements for admission to this major (if applicable).			
I have planned out my course of study for this degree.			
I have considered the electives I will take to complete the requirements for my degree.			
I have researched some career possibilities related to this major.			

Based on this information, are you ready to declare a major? Yes_____ No _____

If you want to discuss your decision or examine questions that still remain about whether or not you are ready to declare, please contact the **Exploration Specialist** at **aep@ut.edu**. You can declare (or change) your major in the Academic Success Center, but please seek assistance if you're still unsure.



Next Steps

If you are committed to a major, CONGRATULATIONS! This is a big step in progressing through your academic plan. If you still have questions, take the time to seek further assistance. Also, understand that many students question their major and academic path at different times during college, so if you find yourself questioning your path again at any point of your college career, please contact the Exploration Specialist for personalized assistance related to your options and concerns at aep@ut.edu.

After declaring a major, be sure you meet with an **Academic Advisor** for guidance on designing your course progression to ensure you can graduate on your desired timeline. If you change your major, you will get a new advisor in your new major. For general assistance, you can visit the **Academic Success Center** in North Walker Hall to speak with an advisor during their drop-in times.

For many students, the major exploration process also involves exploring career options. If you are interested in learning about ways to maximize your options outside the classroom or seeing where a major can lead after graduation, visit the **Office of Career Services**. The Assistant Director for Career Exploration will help you explore your interests related to jobs and career paths. Majors do not lead to one specific career for all students, so realize that the career exploration process is just as individual and important as the major exploration process. Email hireut@ut.edu for more assistance.

If you are interested in exploring your career options on your own, visit https://www.ut.edu/career/exploration/ for access to additional resources. The FOCUS2 assessment provides direct connections between skills, values and interests to a variety of jobs. Students often enjoy this exercise because it shows many more options than they originally considered. Additionally, you can visit http://whatcanidowiththismajor.com/major/ for nationwide information about career fields, skills necessary to succeed and recommendations for required experience related to each major and job.

At UT, you are never alone in your exploration! Reach out, talk with other students, ask faculty questions and believe in your potential to succeed with the help of staff here to guide and explain each step of the way. If you have additional questions, stop by the Academic Success Center to speak with staff in Academic Excellence Programs. We are happy you've chosen UT and can't wait to see you succeed!

