

## THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN CHOOSING A MAJOR

Students take note! To graduate, every student needs a major! Many students come to BYU without a major and that is okay. Even students who come with a major often change their major before graduating. However, it is important to start the process of choosing a major early.

- ✓ Some majors have more credit hours and require a longer time to complete.
- ✓ Some majors are limited enrollment, meaning you need to apply and be accepted into the major.
- ✓ Some majors require you to take pre-requisite classes before being eligible to apply.

*When in doubt, we can help you sort it out!*

University Advisement Center  
2500 WSC – (801) 422-3826

### MAJOR FAQs

*How do I officially declare a major?*

- Go to MyMap → Tools → Change Major Request. This will send a request to the college advisement center for your major, and they will let you know if there are further requirements

*How many majors does BYU have?*

Over 180. You can see a list at:

<http://catalog.byu.edu/>

- *Where can I find a list of requirements for each major at BYU?*  
<http://catalog.byu.edu/programs>

*When do I have to choose a major?*

- You must declare a major when you have attained 60 BYU credit hours (minus exam credits).
- No student may change their major once they have attained 75 BYU credit hours (minus exam credits) unless they petition and are approved to change their major.

*Can I double major?*

- Second majors (except some language second majors) are rare and must be approved by the college advisement center supervisor and the dean of the college responsible for the primary major. Petitions for a double major must be submitted prior to earning 75 BYU hours (excluding exam credits).

*What are BYU's most popular majors?*

- They are: exercise science, management, psychology, English, biology, accounting, economics, communications, political science, and civil engineering.

*Does BYU have a pre-med or pre-law major?*

- No, you can have any major and go to Medical School or Law School. For more information, go to <http://ppa.byu.edu/>.

### MAJOR MYTHS

*There is only one right major/career for me.*

- Most students discover that they can be happy with a variety of majors or careers. Choose the one that you will enjoy most and get started.

*I must choose my major/career very carefully or else I will be "stuck" in a job I don't like for the rest of my life.*

- Most students will experience multiple career changes over their life time.
- Sometimes it is better to concentrate on building a skill set that is transferrable, rather than worrying so much about the actual subject content of your major.

*Employers are only interested in students with majors that tie directly to the jobs they are offering.*

- While it is true that some jobs require specific majors, most jobs require skills that can be developed in a variety of majors. FBI agent, airline pilot, event planner are all jobs that can be obtained without a specific major.
- Desired skills include: ability to problem solve and think analytically, communicate well with others, and lead and manage teams.

*Multiple majors or minors make me more employable so I should complete as many as possible as an undergraduate student at BYU.*

- Your major and minor are only one part of what employers are looking for. Work experience and internships also add to your credentials. Rather than completing multiple majors or minors, your time may be better spent gaining additional work experience or going to graduate school.

# STRATEGIES TO HELP YOU CHOOSE A MAJOR OR CAREER

University Advisement Center (UAC)  
2500 WSC 801-422-3826  
university\_advisement@byu.edu

**Meet often with an UAC Advisor** - UAC Advisors are available to meet with you as often as you like to help you choose a major or career. We are open weekdays from 8:00 – 5:00 except for Tuesdays when closed for devotional. You can call or walk in to schedule an appointment.

**Obtain a List of BYU Majors** - Circle those that interest you and cross out those that don't. Lists of majors are available in the University Advisement Center.

**Investigate the Majors that Interest You** - Look at the courses that are required for the program. Are you excited about them? Do you think they will help you in your life and in your career?

**Take a Career Exploration Class** - Student Development (StDev) 117 *Career Exploration* is a two-credit hour course designed to help students choose majors and careers. You will be spending time anyway trying to make these decisions – why not receive college credit for it too?

**Choose Your University Core Requirements Carefully** - Your UAC Advisor can help you select courses that will help you learn about majors and also fill University Core requirements.

**Keep Your Options Open** - If you are trying to decide between two majors, select courses that are required (or fill University Core requirements) for both.

**Turn One of Your Options into a Minor** - When trying to choose between majors, take courses that will fill major and minor requirements for both. Then when you decide which of the two you want to be your major, your other choice can easily be turned into a minor.

**Take Introductory or Seminar Courses for the Majors or Careers You are Considering** - BYU has seminar courses for pre-medicine, pre-dentistry, pre-optometry, pre-law, and for many of the engineering programs. Many majors also have introductory courses such as Introduction to English Studies (Engl 251), and Historian's Craft (Hist 200).

**Find Out about Deadlines, Prerequisites, and Requirements for Applying for Limited Enrollment Majors** - Some majors have limited enrollment and only accept a certain number of students each year or semester. Find out what these requirements are for the majors that interest you. Take the prerequisite courses and do well in them, so if you decide to apply to a limited enrollment program, you will be prepared.

**Have a Back-Up Plan** - When applying to limited enrollment programs, have a back-up plan in case you are not accepted to the program of your choice. There are often many ways to obtain a goal. UAC Advisors can help you develop alternate plans to achieve your goals.

**Work with a Plan - Literally!** - Part-time work, summer employment, internships, and volunteer work should all be done with a plan. Use these opportunities to investigate areas of interest and to make contacts that will help further your career goals. Even if you are sweeping floors, you can learn much about a work environment, and of course, there are many opportunities for more challenging work if you seek it!

**Visit the Career Studio** – The Career Studio (2590 WSC) is the first stop help center for any BYU student seeking career advice, direction, or help. Exploration Specialists can help you work through activities to learn more about yourself, different majors, and careers of interest. There are also skilled peer mentors that can help you with professional preparation.

**Take a Career Interest Inventory** - The University Advisement Center (2500 WSC) has Career Interest Inventories to help you choose majors and careers. Each takes approximately 35 minutes to complete and there is a fee associated with most (one is free). After you complete the test, a UAC academic and career advisor will meet with you in an hour-long individualized appointment to explain the results to you.

**Explore Career Online Resources** – Helpful information about careers and internships. Free to all current BYU students. <https://careers.byu.edu/>

**Job Shadow** - Thinking about a career but don't know if you would like it? Try job shadowing. Find someone who has the kind of job you want, and then ask if you can follow them around for a day or longer. Put yourself in his or her place. Do you like what you see?

**Information Interviewing** - Find someone who is already working in the profession you are considering and ask them for an interview. Ask them to tell you about their work assignments, what they like and don't like about their job. How did they get the job they have? What training is necessary to do what they do?

**Pre-Professional Advisement** - Interested in pre-law, pre-med, pre-dental, or health profession advisement? Visit with an advisor in the Pre-Professional Advisement Center, 3328 WSC, 801-422-3044.