

Navigating Your Academic Path

A GUIDE TO SELF-DISCOVERY IN CHOOSING YOUR COLLEGE MAJOR

Choosing Your College Major: A Self-Discovery Guide

"It is not what we get. But who we become, what we contribute... that gives meaning to our lives." ~ Tony Robbins

Why This Matters

Choosing a college major feels like standing in front of a giant buffet with only one plate. You're told to "pick wisely," but how do you know what will satisfy you five years down the road? Too many students choose a major based on what sounds impressive, what their parents suggest, or what a friend has chosen. This guide is here to flip that script.

Research indicates that students who select majors aligned with their strengths and values are more likely to remain motivated, graduate on time, and pursue fulfilling careers. A 2022 Gallup-Purdue study found that college engagement nearly doubles when students feel their courses align with their personal goals. In other words, alignment beats prestige every time. Think of it like GPS, if you don't set the right destination, even the fastest car will take you to the wrong place.

Instructions

Read each question and write your response in the space provided. Be honest and specific; this worksheet is for you, not anyone else's expectations.

10 Essential Questions

1. What subjects have kept me curious long after class is over?

Think about topics you research on your own time or discuss with friends.

Your answer:

2. When I succeed at something, what kind of praise makes me feel proud - creativity, problem-solving, leadership, or helping others?

Consider your proudest moments and what made them special.

Your answer:

3. Do I prefer structured, step-by-step learning or open-ended, project-based work?

Reflect on when you've felt most engaged in learning.

Your answer:

4. How much math, science, writing, or public speaking do I enjoy (not just tolerate)?

Be honest about what energizes versus drains you.

Your answer:

5. When have I felt most "in the zone," losing track of time because I loved what I was doing?

These flow states often point to natural strengths and interests.

Your answer:

6. What kinds of problems in the world do I want to be part of solving?

Consider issues that genuinely concern or motivate you.

Your answer:

7. Do I want a career with predictable stability, flexible variety, or high-risk, high-reward growth?

Think about your comfort level with uncertainty and change.

Your answer:

8. How much does potential salary matter to me compared to personal fulfillment?

There's no wrong answer, just be honest about your priorities.

Your answer:

9. Am I choosing this major because I want it or because someone else thinks I should?

Distinguish between external pressure and internal motivation.

Your answer:

10. If money and prestige weren't factors, what would I want to study for the next four years?

This often reveals your truest interests.

Your answer:

Self-Reflection

Which of these questions made me stop and think the longest?

What majors or careers popped into my head more than once while answering?

What's one major I would choose if no one else got to vote on it?

Pulling It Together

Themes I noticed in my answers:

My Top 3 Possible Majors:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Extra Challenge

Ask a parent, teacher, or mentor to answer these 10 questions about you. Compare what they wrote to your own answers. What's similar? What's different? Sometimes others see strengths and patterns we miss in ourselves.

Next Steps

- Research your top 3 majors: required courses, career paths, and job outlook
- Talk to professionals working in fields that interest you
- Consider job shadowing or informational interviews
- Look into internships or volunteer opportunities in related areas
- Remember: you can always change your major, this is a starting point, not a life sentence

Your future self will thank you for taking the time to choose thoughtfully.