

Hi there! Welcome to Part One of the How to Choose a Major video series, Introduction to the Major Exploration Process. My name is Deirdre Mooney and I am an academic advisor for exploratory students in the Student Success Centre. My role is to support all undergraduate students who are exploring their undergraduate degree options. I know from my own experience that being undecided about your program, and choosing what to study, can be overwhelming. I changed my major and transferred schools during my undergraduate studies.

And later, after university, I started on one career path, became uncertain about whether I wanted to continue, and then completely changed careers! Being undecided about my future was challenging.

I realized that my previous decisions were all based on gut instinct. So this time around, I wanted to be more intentional and really figure out who I am, what motivates me, and how I could best use my skills, which meant working through self-reflection activities like those provided in the How to Choose a Major workbook and gathering lots of information.

which meant working through self-reflection activities like those provided in the How to Choose a Major workbook and gathering lots of information. The Major Exploration Process is really about our ability to make intentional, thoughtful, and informed decisions. Because decisions made through exploration are often more rewarding. We guide students through the Major Exploration Process using the How to Choose a Major workbook, which can be downloaded from our website. Both the How to Choose a Major video series and the How to Choose a Major workbook aim to help students: Apply the steps of exploration. Develop skills specific to exploration, like self-reflection, information gathering, evaluation, and decision-making. Develop confidence in applying these skills. And, engage in exploration as a meaningful way to choose a major. These learning outcomes are outlined on page 2 of the workbook. While you easily make decisions everyday, for bigger, more impactful decisions, like choosing a major, this process challenges you to be mindful of the important steps needed to make an informed decision, particularly reflection, gathering information, and evaluating your options. These steps are most important as they will help you think more deeply about who you are, what you want out of your education, and which degree programs are realistic for you. Take your time as you move through the exploration process. It's not realistic to believe that you can move from needing to make a decision to taking action without doing some reflection, information-gathering, and evaluation first. Keep in mind that the process can be iterative, meaning you may need to go back to a previous step to reconsider your responses and options. The exploration process is one that you will use over and over throughout your life, sometimes without thinking about it. When you're able to move through these steps subconsciously, you will have learned the skills of reflection, evaluation, and decision-making. This model is provided on page 3 of the workbook. Remember, major exploration is a process!

Remember, major exploration is a process! Here are some tips to consider as you through. There are five videos, including this one, in the How to Choose a Major series. If you are undecided on which program you would like to study, or are deciding between a few options, be sure to watch all five videos first for a comprehensive overview of how to choose a major. Then, review the How to Choose a Major workbook in its entirety.

This is just a quick skim through the activities and resources to help you get engaged, focused, and excited about the work ahead. Next, go back and watch each individual video as you work through that section of the workbook. Remember to take your time, pause to think, reflect, and discuss with others.

It is okay, even encouraged, to take breaks from this work. It is a lot to process and consider. And choosing a program that you'll be satisfied with is a big

decision! The videos and workbook will be available to access on our website, so you can always come back to revisit content.

If you have questions, want to bounce ideas around, need help evaluating your options, or are ready to make a decision, you can speak to an advisor at any point during the process.

Exploratory Advisors in the Student Success Centre can support your exploration and planning.

Program Advisors in your desired faculty can provide more information about programs and the Change of Program process.

The How to Choose a Major workbook is your go-to tool to help you through the exploration process. It is designed as a guide to walk you through activities for each stage of exploration.

You can print it out, write all over it, or just use it for reference while you capture your ideas elsewhere. There is also a fillable pdf version on our website.

Since the Reflect & Connect stage of the process is so important, yet often overlooked by students, you'll noticed that the majority of the workbook is dedicated to activities to help you with this stage. While the Information & Options stage is only two pages, it is an equally important stage. Here, the workbook encourages you to conduct your own research starting with some key resources and categories of consideration.

Keep in mind that the workbook is a starting point to get you thinking about your education and the options available to you. You may want to do some additional reflection activities online, and there are definitely more resources available to help you gather information about programs.

Be sure to watch Part Two and Three of this video series to learn more! Thanks for watching Part One: Introduction to the Major Exploration Process! Check out the Exploratory Advising Workshops website to watch the other videos in this series and download the How to Choose a Major workbook.

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