

Welcome to Part Four of the How to Choose a Major video series, Evaluate & Decide! My name is Deirdre Mooney and I'm 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.

In this video, I will discuss the Evaluate & Decide stage of the Major Exploration Process and show the activities provided in the How to Choose a Major workbook. I'll provide some extra tips to help you get the most out of each activity. The How to Choose a Major workbook can be downloaded from the Exploratory Advising Workshops website. The third main stage of the exploration process is Evaluate & Decide. The graphic on this slide suggests that in order to move down from all the options available to one viable option, we need to evaluate our choices. So, how do we do that? Before we begin, consider your response to the following question: What characteristics exemplify your decision-making style? Weigh alternatives against each other. Use intuition or gut-feeling. Analyze options and their outcomes.

Imagine living out options and their outcomes. Decide slowly and cautiously. Decide quickly and impulsively. Talk through ideas with someone. Think through ideas independently.

Keep in mind that there are no wrong ways to evaluate.

Most of us use multiple characteristics of decision-making.

The activities in the workbook aim to help students be more conscious and potentially more systematic in evaluating their options.

Let's look at these activities now. Page 21 includes some questions prompting you to think more critically about the degree program options you have available. It's important to refer to the information you've gathered about each potential program so that you can consider the options carefully and weigh programs against each other. These questions mainly focus on admission requirements, potential barriers, and timeline for completing the new program, so that you can be as realistic about your options as possible.

On page 22, you'll see a chart similar to the one used in the Information & Options stage of exploration. If you added categories when gathering information, you're welcome to add them here as well.

To complete this Evaluate chart, you will indicate the top programs you are considering in the left side column. For example, my top programs are Kinesiology, Sociology, and Biochemistry.

Then, for each category, you have five points to distribute across the programs.

For example, for Motivators, I may score Kinesiology 2 points, Sociology 2 points, and Biochemistry 1 point.

Continue allocating your five points for each category and add up the totals at the end. Ideally, the program with the highest total would then become your first choice program. You may notice a discrepancy between the scores you allocate for motivators, personality, and interests versus the scores for admission requirements, time to completion, or academic fit.

What does this mean for your choices and how will you reconcile this discrepancy? Below the chart are some questions prompting you to think critically about the outcome of this ranking activity.

After completing these Evaluate activities, consider your decision-making style? Is there something else that could help you evaluate your options? If you're having difficulty deciding, you're welcome to book an Exploratory Advising appointment.

Once you have evaluated your options, you should be ready to commit to one or two degree programs.

Even if you are deeply committed to one specific degree program choice, it's always a good idea to have a back-up plan in mind. A back-up degree program should be one that is potentially more realistic and less competitive than your first choice and should be something you can see yourself completing if the first choice doesn't work out.

Remember, the exploration process is iterative, meaning that it's okay to go back to previous stages.

If evaluating your options helped you see that your choices may not be as realistic or aligned with your academic strengths as you hoped, go back to the Reflect & Connect and Information & Options stages before making a final decision.

If you are ready to decide, pages 23 and 24 of the workbook can help you finalize the exploration process by committing to a degree program choice and taking action.

If you are ready to decide, pages 23 and 24 of the workbook can help you finalize the exploration process by committing to a degree program choice and taking action. There is space for you to consider ways to add to your university experience and how to gain more transferrable non-academic skills. There's a checklist of action items to help you get organized for making your degree program choice a reality. Thanks for watching Part Four, Evaluate & Decide! Check out the Exploratory Advising Workshops website to watch the other videos in this series and download the How to Choose a Major workbook. Good luck with your exploration!