

# Three Steps to Choosing a Major

The Advisement and Transition staff is pleased to help you in the process of choosing a major. The process also requires you to think reflectively about yourself--your interests, experiences, and values. SUNY Cortland offers students a variety of academic choices; your responsibility involves utilizing the resources available to explore the option that best meets your educational and professional goals.

## The steps in choosing a major:

### 1. Gathering Knowledge about yourself

What are your dreams?

What are your interests? What do you enjoy working with (people, data, things)?

What experiences do you have?

*Career Services can help you answer some of these questions through taking career and interest inventories.*

Sample academic majors through General Education courses

Browse the SUNY Cortland catalog to check out majors that interest you.

Take a GE course in a major that interests you.

For example: Anthropology: ANT 102: Cultural Anthropology (GE category 3)

Geography: GRY 125: Social Geography (GE category 3)

English: ENG 200: Introduction to Literature (GE category 7)

### 2. Gathering Knowledge about possible majors and careers

Make a list of possible majors and prioritize them

Visit Career Services

Make an appointment with a career counselor to discuss how your individual strengths, interests, and talents match different careers and majors

Investigate majors, minors, and classes

Check out the college catalog and read the descriptions of courses, majors, minors

Ask yourself questions about the major: Is the major a BA or BS? How many semesters of foreign language do I need?

What unique internship opportunities do I have in this major? Should I study abroad?

Investigate how the major relates to careers

What does someone with a degree in this major do?

Are the courses in the major interesting to me?

### **3. Connect information about yourself to information about careers and majors**

What courses have you taken that you liked? Did well in? Any patterns or consistencies?

*"I never missed my psychology class."*

*"My favorite class in high school was Chemistry."*

*"I got two As in my writing classes"*

Talk to people: Talk to Faculty or Advisors to learn more about the majors on your compiled list.

Where or for whom does a person work with this major? Corporation, state, city, county, or federal government, city or county educational system? Private businesses? Non-profits?

***What is the job market*** for a person with this major?

What do you like most about this major and ***why did you go into this field?***

Gain experience outside of class - Learn what you like

Volunteer!

**Use a part-time job, internship, or work-study to learn what it's like** in a particular field.

Consider an internship or other experiences - Visit **Career Services** - learn about internships and a variety of summer job opportunities. - Ask about **Study Abroad** opportunities