

Welcome to Part Three of the How to Choose a Major video series, Information & Options. 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 Information & Options stage of the Major Exploration Process and show three information-gathering websites.

I'll provide some extra tips to help you get the most out of each resource. I will then discuss some additional campus resources and opportunities to help you explore further. The How to Choose a Major workbook includes links to these resources and gives you space to record and track the information that you gather. The How to Choose a Major workbook can be downloaded from the Exploratory Advising Workshops website.

The second main stage of the Major Exploration Process is Information & Options.

In this stage, you'll use a wide variety of resources to gather information about degree programs and potential careers to help you further establish what your options are.

Page 19 of the How to Choose a Major workbook provides links and instructions on how to use these three key websites to start your search.

Page 20 of the workbook is set up as a space to record your findings for four top degree programs and lists some categories of information you'll want to know about each program. You are welcome to add categories and research more than four degree programs.

Create your own chart, make an excel spreadsheet, or simply make a bulleted point list of the information you find - any method works.

Keep in mind that having information recorded and easily accessible for future use is integral to Part Four, the Evaluate & Decide stage of the process.

It will be difficult to evaluate your options if you can't remember anything about them. Which resource you decide to start with should largely depend on your main motivation for getting your degree.

Remember to continually connect back to your reflection activities to check degree or career information against information about yourself.

Now, let's look at these specific websites. The first resource is the Undergraduate Explore Programs website, which provides information on all programs offered at the University of Calgary. Since it can be overwhelming to scroll through the entire list, you can sort programs using the Undergraduate Faculties drop-down menu.

For example, to only see programs offered by the Faculty of Science, select "Faculty of Science" from the drop-down menu, and then click "Filter".

Then, when you click on a particular program, you can read a short description, including some key questions scholars in that field ask.

Consider your interest level in the information provided.

Consider your interest level in the information provided. Do you want to know the answers to these questions? More importantly, consider that each field of study asks and answers questions in a certain way, so are you interested in learning how

to ask and answer these types of questions?

Are the topics ones you want to engage with academically?

Are the topics ones you want to engage with academically? Or would you be satisfied reading or watching TV about these topics on your own time? On the right, you'll see a general overview of first-year courses in the program and some links to more detailed program information, which we'll look at shortly. When you scroll down, you'll also see a quote from a professor or former student. Consider whether their experience of the program or the opportunities discussed appeal to you.

Below that, you'll see a red Admission Requirements box.

This is the best source for checking the admission requirements of any program. Remember, when submitting a Change of Program request to move to another degree, you will also have to meet the admission requirements.

If you click on "University transfer student" then "View requirements", you'll see the required high school subjects, any university-level prerequisites, if any, and the competitive GPA range for that year.

The second resource is the Academic Calendar website, which is a comprehensive guide to all University policies, regulations, and degree program requirements.

Reviewing degree programs in the Calendar under the "Faculty" or "School" links can help you better understand the structure of a degree and the courses required in each program. For example, to view program requirements for Faculty of Arts degrees, click the Faculty of Arts link, then Program Details, then choose the major or degree program of interest.

The first page is an overview of the department, listing degrees offered and more information about the majors.

Scroll to the bottom to select the specific degree.

Here you can see the number of units required for the major and the specific courses.

You can use this information to read course descriptions and gauge your level of interest in the program.

Let's look at the Faculty of Science for another example.

Click on Faculty of Science, then Program Details, and again choose the major or degree program of interest.

Again, the first page is an overview of the department, so scroll down to the bottom to select the specific degree.

Science programs are laid out slightly differently - the courses constituting the field are at the top, followed by the major program requirements, which include the units required for options.

It's important to consider the ratio of courses required for the major and how many option courses are allowed within the degree program.

Depending on your interests, you may want more space to add in other things like a minor or embedded certificate. Or, you may want a program that is more structured. When reviewing courses required in a particular program, consider your academic

successes and challenges.

Does the program include courses that may be a barrier to your success? The third resource is the Career Services Degree Profiles website, which helps students consider the career possibilities associated with their degree.

Every faculty is listed on the left with drop-down menus to view specific majors.

Again, the website starts with a brief overview of the program, then provides a list of the key knowledge and skills a student would develop from this degree.

This is a helpful way to conceptualize what you will get from your degree because these skills are far more marketable in the workforce than the subject-specific knowledge you have acquired.

Below you can see a list of sample jobs that our alumni with this degree have gone on to do. This is not an exhaustive list, and it mostly includes jobs related to the field.

There are lots of people with this degree who are in careers that are totally unrelated to the field. Below that, you'll see a list of potential industries that alumni with this degree tend to work in. Choosing potential industries may be more helpful than choosing a specific job title because titles change more rapidly than whole industries.

The purpose of this website is to give you some ideas of career possibilities. You will need to do more career research to determine your best options and how to pursue them. If career is your main motivator for getting a degree, you might want to start with more in-depth career research before looking at degree programs. If a specific degree program is required for your desired career, that will narrow your degree options.

However, if any degree can help you pursue your desired career, or if career is not a top motivator for getting your degree, then your options are much more open. Lastly, this website includes a list of associations and professional development organizations related to the field.

Researching associations and connecting with its members are great ways to learn more about potential careers. You may find that those websites are a great starting point, but that you ultimately need more information to be able to make a decision. That's the time to access campus resources and start talking to people. Remember to always connect back to your main motivation for getting a degree, as again, it can guide where you start gathering information.

On this slide, the column on the left includes academic or program resources where you can learn more about our degree programs or fields of study. Speaking with professors is a great way to learn more about a specific discipline. Asking professors about their research, and that of their colleagues, can give you insight into what the field of study is all about and whether you would be interested in exploring similar ideas. Remember that each discipline has a specific way of asking questions and answering them.

Consider how that method connects with your academic strengths.

The middle column includes more career resources so you can learn more about career opportunities relative to desired degree programs and how to get career-related experience.

A lot of our degree programs can include co-op education, or an internship, where

students engage in work experiences while studying.

This is a powerful way to boost your skill set and start building your network. The column on the right includes student experience resources where you can learn how to add experiential learning to your academics and how to gain valuable non-academic skills.

The Study Abroad office provides opportunities for students to internationalize their degree. Even just one short global experience can have a huge impact on your life and how future employers view your experiences.

Page 19 of the workbook includes links to web resources that may be helpful for gathering more information related to career and involvement.

Thanks for watching Part Three, Information & Options.

Thanks for watching Part Three, Information & Options. 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!