



# Choosing a Major

**Academic and Career Advising**  
Waubonsee Community College



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# Session Objective:

- **For students who know their college major:**

Understand your major has multiple career options and understand your major might change multiple times.

- **For students who are undecided on a college major:**

Choosing a major is an exploration process based on your interests or goals.





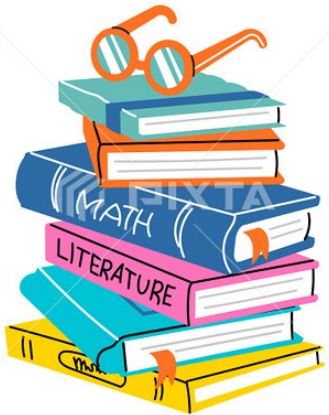
# Today's session includes:

- What a Major Is and What a Major Isn't
- College / Degree Goals
- Waubonsee Degree Options
- Exploring Options / Making Decisions
- Taking Action with the Right Fit



# What is a College Major?

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A specific area of study that requires a group of courses selected by the college in order to receive a degree.

College majors often prepare students to embark on a career in that specified field of study.



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# A College Major is **Not**

- **Your IDENTITY**
- **ONE and DONE Career path**
- **What OTHERS THINK you should study/be**



# What is a Career?

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A career can be defined as: An occupation or vocational trade that one undertakes for a significant amount of time in a specific area of interest.



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# What is a College Degree?

A qualification that is awarded to students after successful completion of a specific course of study in post-secondary education.

Certificate | Associate | Bachelors

## Career and Degree Options at WCC

### Occupational (AAS, Certificate)

- Prepare students for specific careers/occupations
- Learn specific technical skills needed for future career options
- Ex., Accounting, Automotive Technology, Welding, Computer Information Systems, Nursing, etc.

### Transfer

- Take courses in a wide variety of subjects
- Gaining surface knowledge in several areas of study, but not technical skill focused
- Range of career / degree options



# How do you make the most of YOUR college experience?

## HAVE A PLAN!



**Do Exploration / Self Discovery**



**Be Attentive to opportunity**



**Be Intentional - get experience**

Volunteer | Intern | Network




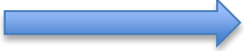





# Major and Career's Relationship

**Major**

**Career/Job Title**

<b>Welding Technology</b>		<b>Welder, TIG Welder, Supervisor</b>
<b>Nursing</b>		<b>NICU Nurse, Nursing Instructor, Hospital Administrator</b>
<b>Art</b>		<b>Registrar of Loans, Media Events Specialist, Volunteer Engagement</b>
<b>Information Technology</b>		<b>IT Manager, Digital Analyst, Education Assistant, Engineering Analyst</b>
<b>Psychology</b>		<b>Academic Advisor, Behavior Analyst, Attorney, Recruiter, Marketing Analyst</b>



# College Degree, Major & Career: The Trilogy

**Degree**

**Major**

**Career**

**Associate in Applied Science, Welding Technology - TIG Welder**

**Associate in Applied Science, Nursing - Registered Nurse**

**Associate in Fine Arts, Art - Communications Specialist**

**Associate in Engineering Science - Mechanical Engineer**

**Associate in Science, Mathematics - Financial Analyst**



# It Doesn't Matter What You Major In

- This thought can result in a lack of goals, a major that doesn't fit
  - Employers want education & experience
  - Indecision can lead to less success
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# You Can Get A Job With Any Major

- True – But do you want a job, or a rewarding career?
  - Employers want the best prepared candidate
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# Choose Your Major Based On Your Favorite Subject

- This is a good starting point, focusing on interests, but..
  - Classroom does not equal the workforce
  - Favorite subject may not lead to a career that matches your lifestyle
  - It's okay to leave your passions as personal activities
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# Changing A Major Isn't A Big Deal

- Better to change for the right reasons than to stay for the wrong reasons
- Be aware of personal time-line
- Remember your goals, why are **you** attending college?

# Choosing a Major



What does the process look like?



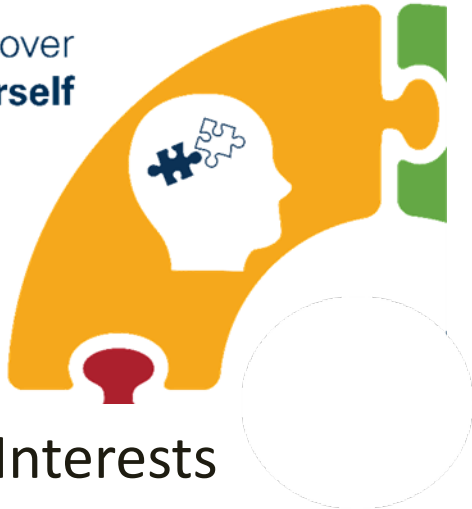
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# Four Steps from Discovery to Action



# Discover Yourself: Self-Assessment Options

Discover  
Yourself



- Interests
- Personality
- Values
- Needs
- Skills & Abilities
- Desired lifestyle

## What do I want for myself?

### Resources at Waubonsee

- Career Coach
- O\*NET Interest Profiler
- Career Counseling & Exploration
  - Career Assessments
- COL 131 – Strategies for Career Exploration



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# Explore Options: Research Career Information



Explore  
Options

## Where do I fit?

- Nature of work
- Training/Education
- Work environment
- Salary
- Job outlook/Trends
- Career growth
- Related occupations

## Resources at Waubonsee

- Internships, Study Abroad & Disney College Program
  - Faculty & Staff
  - CandidCareer Videos
    - Volunteer
    - Part-time Work
- Student Clubs & Activities



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# Make Choices: Informed by Info & Assessments



- Declare or change your major
- Identify related experiences you want to gain
- Choose useful electives
- Gain experience in and out of the classroom
- Make a commitment!

## Resources at Waubonsee

- Join a student organization
- Share what helped you make a decision
- Volunteer in field of study





# Take Action: Gain Knowledge & Experience



## What's Next?

- Create / update resume
- Join LinkedIn
- Apply for jobs, internships, other experiences
- Prepare for interviews
- Network with mentors and professionals
- Attend Waubonsee events

## Resources at Waubonsee

- Career Development
  - Student Life
  - Career Exploration
- [www.waubonsee/careerdevelopment](http://www.waubonsee/careerdevelopment)



# “Discover” Websites

- **O\*Net Online**
- **Career Coach**
- **What Can I Do With This Major?**
- **Candid Career Videos**



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# Questions?

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## Use Our Resources

### Academic and Career Advising

Work with our department to translate majors into careers, introduce and explain career assessments tools, career exploration resources, and academic paths.

Work with our Counseling staff to **take interest, personality and other inventories and career assessments.**

Contact us!

(630) 466-2361

[advising@waubonsee.edu](mailto:advising@waubonsee.edu)



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