

February Article 2 – Majors, Internships, and Careers – Oh My!

Recently in the Shepard Academic Resource Center, many of the students we've met with are starting to think ahead to next year. They have recently gone through housing selection and decided where and with whom they want to live. Now the next big decision seems to be which classes are necessary to take next semester – and related to that, the bigger questions of majors, internships, and careers.

Some of the students we've been meeting with are feeling no conflict over classes and majors – they may have started out fairly confident in their major choice, and the classes they've taken so far have confirmed that they're on the right path.

Others started out in this first category – confident in their major choice – but the classes they've taken thus far have instead confirmed that they are not interested in that original major at all. We're meeting with some of these students, and we're hearing that they're concerned they are “too far” into the major to make a different choice now. If your child is one of these students, we want to assure you (as we do them) that no one is “stuck” in a major this early. Many majors have room for electives, so classes can transfer from major to major – and even if electives in a certain major are limited, taking additional classes in future semesters or signing up for summer classes (at UP or a local community college) can often get your student caught up in his or her new major. Talk to your student about making an appointment with us to review the specifics of any major change.

Lastly, we're meeting with students who are unsure of which major they want to choose – but think they have to know...now. When we meet with these students, we talk to them about their interests, and help them to think about classes to take next semester that will work towards any major but also allow them to pursue potential interests. We also refer them to the Career Center to take interest surveys and meet with Career Service professionals.

In fact, we refer students from each category to Career Services. As noted, they can help undecided students move towards a major by reviewing interest surveys, discussing potential careers, and showing students what can be done with each UP major. Career Services can pair students who have recently decided to change majors with professionals in that field for informational interviews. Students set on a particular major can benefit from meeting with Career Services to prepare a resume for future internship opportunities and to learn how to network within that field.

No matter where your student is in deciding on a major and career, it's never too early to get started working with Career Services!