ONLINE AND PRINT RESOURCES

FOCUS (www.ycp.edu/careerdevelopment)
FOCUS is an online system designed to help students with career and educational planning. The system includes a number of self-assessments that can facilitate the major choice and career exploration processes. Users are able to learn about majors and careers that are consistent with their interests, personality, skills, and values.

What Can I Do With This Major? (www.ycp.edu/careerdevelopment)
The “What Can I Do with This Major?” website allows users to explore career areas, employers, and resume-building strategies associated with practically any major.

O-NET (http://www.onetonline.org/)
The O*NET website serves as the nation's primary source of occupational information, allowing users to learn about specific careers in terms of skills, knowledge, technology, activities, environment, salary, outlook, etc.

Career Resource Library (Campbell Hall 200)
The Career Resource Library has a section of major exploration books. Some are very direct and describe various sub-fields and paths to success from a single major, such as the Great Jobs for... series (e.g., Great Jobs for Biology Majors, Great Jobs for Computer Science Majors, etc.). The Library also has information about graduate school, law school, and study abroad.

Candid Career (www.ycp.edu/careerdevelopment)
Like YouTube, Candid Career allows users to search for and watch videos of interest. Students may watch informational interviews to learn about specific occupations as well as to hear professionals offer career advice on various topics.

College Catalog (http://www.ycp.edu/offices-and-services/registrar/catalogs/)
Read through the College Catalog to learn more about YCP majors and minors as well as course requirements and career paths. Determine if there are overlapping courses among the majors and minors you are considering and/or if you may “test drive” certain programs by taking courses that apply to general education requirements while also introducing you to a major of interest. Note: Please see your academic advisor to ensure that you are viewing the correct version of the College Catalog.
IN-PERSON RESEARCH

Coursework
Try a variety of classes to explore different academic areas—especially through general education requirements and free electives. Talk to your academic advisor for suggestions and meet with a career counselor to discuss specific strategies.

Talk to People
Meeting with people who know about a major that interests you will give you first-hand information and a network of campus contacts. Academic advisors, professors, current students, and professionals who studied that major could offer their perspective. Prior to meeting with any of these individuals, it is important to prepare a list of questions; Quintessential Career’s article titled “200 Informational Interview Sample Questions” is likely to be helpful in this process.

Majors Fair
Attend this annual fall event to connect with faculty and student representatives from the academic departments as well as staff from the Academic Advising Center, the Career Development Center, and the Center for Professional Excellence. This one-stop-shopping event provides a great venue to gather information prior to the spring course scheduling period.
THINGS TO KNOW WHEN CONSIDERING A MAJOR

Use the following exercise to answer questions about each major you are considering. Discuss your answers with your academic advisor and/or a career development professional.

Major Option: ___________________________    Department: ___________________________

1. How many courses/credits are required to complete this major?

2. How much flexibility is there for free elective courses and the order in which classes are taken?

3. Is there a minimum GPA I would need to maintain for this major?

4. Are there any requirements to enter the major (e.g., departmental approval, applications, portfolios, etc.)?

5. Is it possible to minor in this subject?

6. Approximately what percentage of the required coursework appeals to me? Why?

7. What about the major is not appealing to me? Why?

8. What interests and skills are critical for students in this major? Do I have those interests and skills?

9. Does this major require any time off campus for activities such as internships, study abroad, etc.?

10. What are some career fields connected to this major? Do they involve graduate study?

11. Who is the Program Coordinator? Department Chair? Administrative Assistant?

12. What other majors might be similar to this one?

13. What questions do I still have about this major? What steps do I need to take to answer them?

To declare a major/minor, visit the Academic Advising Center (Campbell Hall 200).
MYTH: "Something is wrong with me if I don't know what I want to do."
FACT: Most college students don't have a clear idea of what they want to major in or do for a career. This is normal. With research and support, you can make decisions that are right for you.

MYTH: "There is only ONE career for me."
FACT: The elements that determine career satisfaction are found in many different occupations. For example, if you like helping people in an artistic way, you may be happy as a dance therapist or a high school art teacher.

MYTH: "If I choose a major or a career, I'll be stuck with it forever."
FACT: Most majors prepare you for a variety of careers. When you combine the skills you'll learn in your major with others you'll gain from full-time work, internships, and other activities, you'll have the ability to move in a variety of directions. Most people have multiple careers and jobs during their lives.

MYTH: "I've failed if I make the wrong choice."
FACT: You only fail when you do not adapt. If you learn that a major or career choice is not right for you, change it.

MYTH: "Happiness is impossible without the perfect career."
FACT: Your career can be a major source of satisfaction in life, but it’s not everything. Sometimes a job simply earns money so that other time can be spent on the things that really make you happy.

MYTH: "There is a test or an expert that can tell me what to do with the rest of my life."
FACT: No assessment or expert knows you better than you do. There are people and resources you can use for support in clarifying your interests, skills, personality, and decision-making patterns; however, in the end, you make your own decisions.

Did you know?
577 YCP students changed their major during the Fall 2014 to Spring 2015 time period.

MYTH: "I won't be qualified to do anything with a liberal arts degree."
FACT: You will be more qualified than most: The skills you develop in a liberal arts curriculum—communication, interpersonal interaction, analysis, and flexibility—are those most desired by employers.

MYTH: "I just need a little more information before I can make a decision."
FACT: Although it's important to make a well-informed decision, sometimes people are paralyzed because they think that no matter how much information they have gathered, it's not enough. They indefinitely put off making a decision. Don't let this happen to you. Collect enough information about your major or career choice but realize that, even after you make a decision, you will still be able to collect more information and evaluate whether it was the right one.
At YCP, students who are undecided about a major have a home in the Academic Services Division. Undeclared students are able to explore the College’s 50+ majors and 60+ minors all while completing courses towards graduation.

With the support of an Academic Advisor and a Peer Advisor, Undeclared students will engage in a 360° exploration of themselves, their major, and their potential career. Advisors help students with:

THE UNDECLARED EXPERIENCE
- Bi-monthly meetings with one’s assigned Peer Advisor
- Monthly meetings with one’s assigned Academic Advisor
- Undeclared student socials and events
- Continued communication with Academic and Peer Advisors until a major is declared

Questions? Contact Stephanie Perago, Coordinator of Undeclared Student Advising
(717)815-2043 • sperago@ycp.edu
Plan to Succeed

Each student should develop a personalized “Plan to Succeed” for their academic career. Use this resource to help you determine both what to include in your plan and when you should implement each step.

Year 1: ENGAGE with the campus community by attending events, connecting with people, and becoming familiar with resources and services

- Participate in campus activities/groups and community service to connect with others and identify interests
- Consider obtaining a part-time job during the school year and/or a summer job to build skills and work history
- Earn a strong GPA and establish positive relationships with faculty members
- Take advantage of academic support services such as the Center for Teaching and Learning
- Focus on determining your academic major interests by attending Majors Fair and using the “Choosing a Major” packet
- Consider the possibility of studying abroad by attending the Global Education Fair or a study abroad information session
- Meet with your academic advisor regularly to discuss your academic and career plans

Log-on to Spartan Career Path to:

- Find and register for workshops and special events
- Schedule appointments with staff members
- Search and apply for jobs and internships
- https://ycp-csm.symplicity.com

Year 2: EXPLORE career options that align with your interests, skills, values, personality, and goals

- Work with your academic advisor to select courses that will help you learn about certain fields in greater depth
- Confirm your academic major by revisiting the “Choosing a Major” packet and speaking with faculty members
- Attend the Career Expo to learn about long-term career opportunities and short-term jobs/internships
- Chat with individuals who hold jobs that interest you to inquire about preparation, advice, the field, etc.
- Develop a long-term plan of classes, involvements, and experiences that will sharpen your professional skills
- Write a rough draft of a resume and cover letter to be reviewed by a Career Development Center staff member
Year 3: EXPERIENCE career options and the professional work world by participating in meaningful opportunities

- Participate in career fairs and networking events to develop contacts and prepare for the job search process
- Update your resume and cover letter and have them reviewed by a Career Development staff member
- Search for (and learn how to get academic credit for) internships while maintaining a strong GPA
- Pursue leadership opportunities/roles on campus and in the community
- Attend seminars and other events sponsored by the Center for Professional Excellence
- Practice interviewing with Career Development staff members or record and review a mock interview in Spartan Career Path
- Consider if you are interested in graduate school and research the process of selecting and applying to schools

Year 4: EMERGE from York College onto a career path by synthesizing all your experiences in a plan for post-graduation success

- Polish your job searching skills and materials via mock interviews and resume/cover letter reviews
- Complete applications for graduate school and keep your academic advisor informed of your plans
- Meet with a Career Development staff member to discuss resources and strategies for job searching
- Attend career fairs and networking events to actively advance your job search
- Take advantage of Center for Professional Excellence seminars and events
- Log-in to Spartan Career Path regularly to stay informed of various career-related opportunities

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