What is a major? 
A major is the field in which one chooses to specialize during their undergraduate education. The choice that is made indicates the academic discipline to which one will devote a significant portion of their academic time and energy. Upon successful completion of the major requirements and University requirements, one is granted a bachelor’s degree.

Selection of a major is an opportunity to develop intellectual skills, as well as demonstrate one’s ability to grasp a subject from the fundamentals through advanced study.

What classes should I take? 
Trying out courses in a diversity of majors can help narrow down what you like and don’t like. You can explore a wide range of classes in the general education curriculum. This variety provides an opportunity for you to explore potential majors and complete general education requirements at the same time. However, it isn’t necessary to limit yourself to classes only in the general education curriculum. If there is a class that sounds interesting but doesn’t meet a general education requirement, it can still help you in your studies. Other courses can serve as electives, offer insight into a field of study and provide credits you can put toward graduation.

What is the general education curriculum? 
The general education program integrates a broad foundation of knowledge and skills with the study of contemporary concerns. The goals and competencies within the curriculum are reflective of those capabilities essential for all college-educated adults facing the twenty-first century.

A Bachelor of Science degree requires the completion of a minimum of 44 General Education credits distributed across 11 categories. A Bachelor of Arts degree requires an additional 8 credits of a single foreign language for a total of 52 credits. Detailed information about the General Education Program can be found in the Undergraduate Bulletin and the General Education and Cultural Diversity Bulletin.

How to choose a major: 
1. Gathering information: 
Now is the time to get started on the very important process of gathering information you will need to choose your future major. Choosing a major requires you to gather information in three main areas:
   a) University majors and programs: 
   the Undergraduate Bulletin (printed or online version) provides a list of academic programs, course descriptions, and requirements for graduation. Your academic advisor is available to discuss these options with you and to recommend courses that would give you an opportunity to “sample” these programs. Taking a variety of courses will provide valuable information about your abilities and interests in these possible fields.
   b) Self-awareness: Research shows that a better person-career match leads to greater life satisfaction and success. Knowing your unique pattern of interests, values, abilities, personality characteristics, and lifestyle requirements will help you make a better match with a major or career. This information can be obtained through a variety of means, such as discussions with your advisor and/or professors, career testing and counseling, Web-based self-assessment programs, job experience, classroom experience, or life experience. Make a commitment to find out more about yourself and keep a record of what you discover for use in future decision making.
   c) Occupational information: Information about occupations can be obtained in books and career files in the Career Development Center; internship or employment experiences; volunteer/community service experiences; talking to professors or people who are already working in fields of potential interest (also known as “informational interviews”); Web-based information sites.

2. Making your decision: 
Choosing a major is a process that takes time and care. Once you have gathered a sufficient amount of information in the areas above, you can begin the decision-making process. Most people will have to “recycle” back to gathering information from time to time. Decision making involves:
   a) Putting all the information together and summarizing it.
   b) Matching your summary to possible majors.
   c) Weighing the benefits and costs of each possible choice.
Resources for Undecided Students
Professors, advisors, and career counselors can offer supportive and objective assistance in determining a major. As an undecided student, it is recommended that you take advantage of the numerous services designed specifically to help with your decision.

Office of First Year Experience  www.mnsu.edu/fye
The Office of First Year Experience offers academic advising for all undeclared students. Your advisor can help you with assessing your academic progress, career and life planning, development of study skills, and appropriate course selection.

First Year Seminar  www.mnsu.edu/fye/seminar/
First Year Seminar is a course designed to assist students with their transition to the University. Class size is intentionally limited in each class section to allow students to make connections with other students, get to know your instructor on a 1–1 level and explore tools necessary in finding personal success at Minnesota State Mankato.

Career Development Center  www.mnsu.edu/cdc/
The Career Development Center (CDC) counselors provides numerous services to undeclared students, including help with choosing academic majors, identifying career options, assessing the availability of jobs in a certain field, and finding an internship.

Strategies for Success Learning Community  www.mnsu.edu/fye/communities/types.html#success
The Learning Communities Program provides an opportunity for incoming first year students to join a community that supports their academic success and transition to college life. The Strategies for Success Community provides students the opportunity to learn about themselves, develop a plan of study, and explore career opportunities.

Additional information may be obtained from:
The Office of First Year Experience  www.mnsu.edu/fye
Gage 10 Complex
Minnesota State University, Mankato
Mankato, MN 56001
507-389-5498


What if I don’t have a major?
Being undeclared means you are in a good position to explore possible majors with an open mind. To begin your search, look over what majors are available here at Minnesota State Mankato. You may want to scan this list and check off areas that seem interesting to you. To find out more information regarding these majors, research the undergraduate catalog or speak with and academic advisor at the Office of First Year Experience.

Accounting
Alcohol and Drug Studies
Anthropology
Art
Art History
Astronomy
Athletic Training
Automotive Engineering Technology
Aviation
Biochemistry
Biology
Biotechnology
Chemistry
Civil Engineering
Clinical Lab Science
Communication Disorders
Community Health
Computer Information Science
Computer Engineering
Computer Engineering Technology
Computer Science
Computer Science MGMT INFO Systems
Construction Management
Corrections
Dental Hygiene
Earth Science
Economics
Electrical Engineering
Electronic Engineering Technology
English
Environmental Science
Ethnic Studies
Family and Consumer Science
Finance
Food Science Technology
French
Geography
German
History
Humanities
International Business
International Relations
Law Enforcement
Management
Manufacturing Engineering Technology
Marketing
Mass Communications
Mathematics
Mechanical Engineering
Music
Nursing
Open Studies
Philosophy
Philosophy, Politics, and Economics
Physical Education
Physics
Political Science
Psychology
Recreation, Parks and Leisure Services
Scandinavian Studies
Social Studies
Social Work
Sociology
Spanish
Speech Communication
Theatre
Urban and Regional Studies
Women’s Studies