

Big ideas.

Real-world thinking.



MINNESOTA STATE
UNIVERSITY
MANKATO

UNDECIDED MAJOR

WHAT IS AN UNDECIDED MAJOR?

If you are entering Minnesota State University, Mankato, without a specific field of study, you are “undecided” about your major, and you are in good company. National data shows that up to 50% of entering college students are undecided, and up to 75% of college students in the U.S. change their major at least once (Gordon, 2007). Being undecided opens up opportunities for you to explore options that you may have never seen before, with the support of an advisor in our University Advising Center.

Your major is the field in which you choose to specialize during your undergraduate education. Your major plays a significant role in how you spend your time at college – what courses you take, what organizations you belong to, and who you’ll spend most of your time with. This will help you develop intellectual skills and demonstrate your ability to grasp a subject from the fundamentals through advanced study. It’s not a decision to take lightly – you’ll devote much of your academic time and energy to the completion of your major requirements.

Courses to take:

Trying out courses in a variety of majors can help narrow down what you like and don’t like. You can explore a wide range of courses in the general education curriculum. This will provide an opportunity for you to explore potential majors and complete general education requirements at the same time. If there is a class that sounds interesting but doesn’t meet a general education requirement, it can still help you in your studies by offering insight into a field of study and providing credits towards graduation.

Everyone’s college journey is different. Remember that you are not alone in the process. Our advisors at the University Advising Center will walk you through the process of which courses to take based on your individualized plan and major of interest.

Here’s how to decide on a major of interest:

Now is the time to get started on the important process of gathering information. It is normal to not know what you would like to pursue after high school or if you have been away from school for a while. Students who are undecided don’t typically choose a major until after their second or third semester of college. Choosing a major requires you to gather information in three main areas:

- (1) University majors: the Undergraduate Catalog provides a list of academic majors, course descriptions, and requirements for graduation. Taking a variety of courses will provide valuable information about your abilities and interests in these possible fields.
- (2) 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. Make a commitment to find out more about yourself and keep a record of what you discover for use in future decision-making.
- (3) 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; web-based information sites.

Choosing a major is a process that takes time. Once you have gathered a sufficient amount of information in the areas above, you can begin the decision-making process.

RESOURCES FOR UNDECIDED STUDENTS

Professors, advisors, and career counselors can offer supportive and objective assistance in determining a major. As a student who is still undecided about your major, it is recommended that you take advantage of the numerous services designed specifically to help you make a decision towards a career goal. We are here for you!

University Advising Center (UAC)

<https://link.mnsu.edu/uac>

At the University Advising Center, we meet with you individually to connect you with people, information, services and resources to help you succeed as a student and beyond. We have conversations with you about what is going right, so you can recognize and build on those strengths. Tell us where you need support, and we can connect you to that support and assist as you navigate and remove barriers. We want to help you reach your goals and achieve your dreams!

First-Year Seminar (FYEX 100)

mnsu.edu/newstudent/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 their instructor on a 1-1 level, and explore tools necessary to find personal success at Minnesota State University, Mankato.

Career Development Center

mnsu.edu/cdc

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

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT

University Advising Center

Minnesota State University, Mankato
111 Memorial Library
Mankato, MN 56001

Phone

507-389-1650 (V)
800-627-3529 or 711 (MRS/TTY)

You are encouraged to visit the campus.

To arrange for a visit, please call:
Office of Admissions: 507-389-1822
Toll-free: 800-722-0544

For additional information about course requirements, please visit mnsu.edu/academics/academic-catalog/

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