

PARALLEL PATHS

MAJOR CHOICE AND CAREER GOALS



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“WHAT?” VS “WHY?”

Understanding Strengths, Interests, Values, Motivations, & Goals

1. Major and career choice is often strongly influenced by external factors.
2. Students often select a major or career before being fully informed of the expectations, challenges, and realities of the field.
3. Understanding students' strengths, interests, values, and goals can help us as advisors and counselors to guide them in major choice.

The Importance of Parallel Paths

Exploring a World of Possibilities

1. There is no one path to any one career.
2. This means one major can open the door to many majors; an anthropology major has more career options than “anthropologist.”
3. Similarly, for any given career, there are multiple possible pathways.
4. Career assessments such as Focus2Career, CareerExplorer, and Existential help students explore their options.

High Demand Majors

Major Specific Criteria Still Required

1. Nursing, Basic Pre-Licensure, BSN
2. Computer Science, B.S.
3. Criminal Justice, B.S.
4. Psychology, B.A.
5. Social Work, B.A.
6. Television, Film, and Media Studies, B.A.

Case Study: Nursing

Nursing as Career vs Nursing as Major

- Alternate Paths: Major + Post Bacc
 - Nutritional Science
 - Kinesiology
 - Biology
 - Applied Science
- Alternate Fields: Nursing Adjacent Majors and Careers
 - Public Health
 - Health Care Administration

Case Study: Psychology

Therapist or Theorist?

- What is the student's goal?
- Alternate paths:
 - Sociology
 - Rehabilitation Services (and counseling)

Case Study: Computer Science

How Much Math is Too Much Math?

- Again, what is the student's goal?
- Alternate path:
 - Computer Information Systems

Case Study: Social Work

Understanding Student Career Goals

- For most students, the MSW is the ultimate goal for career success
- MSW does NOT require an undergraduate degree in Social Work
- Alternate paths:
 - Child Development
 - Rehabilitation Services
 - A Social Science Major: Sociology, Anthropology, Political Science
 - Any Ethnic Studies Major: Chicana/o Latina/o Studies, Pan African Studies, Asian American Studies
 -and more!

Case Study: Criminal Justice

Law Enforcement, CSI, or Law Adjacent?

- Alternate paths: Sociology and other social sciences
- Forensic Science requires a SCIENCE major

Case Study: Television, Film, and Media

“But what I really want to do is direct...”

- Alternate paths:
 - Theatre
 - Communication
- These majors can be couple with hand on experience and certifications

Questions?