

# How to Choose a Major...



Title III – Math Accelerated Pathways to STEM (MAPS)  
Math STEM Grant  
Los Angeles Valley College

## Myths: Choosing a Major..

- I will never find a major that fits me
- Once I choose a major I am stuck with it
- There is only one right major for me

# What is a Major?

- Leads to earning a degree/career
- Designed for academic purposes
- Majors lead to different career fields

# Choosing a Major is Based on:

- Values – motivators & beliefs assist in making choices
- Interests – preferences in specific type of work
- Personality – traits, tendencies, & attitudes
- Ability – attributes & special talents acquired through training/education

# Interest Oriented Choice..

- Favorite Course Approach – Choose a major based on course (s) I enjoy
- Marketable Approach – Choose a major based on what will make the most money

Websites: [www.salary.com](http://www.salary.com)  
[www.salaryexpert.com](http://www.salaryexpert.com)

# Career-Goal Oriented Choice..

- Logical Approach – Explore career options

Websites: [www.cacareerzone.org](http://www.cacareerzone.org)

[www.missingmajor.com](http://www.missingmajor.com)

[www.westcoastcareers.com](http://www.westcoastcareers.com)

[www.rileyguide.com](http://www.rileyguide.com)

# Assessment Oriented Choice..

- Self-evaluation Approach – Choose a major based on self-assessment

Websites: [www.eureka.org](http://www.eureka.org)

[www.humanmetrics.com](http://www.humanmetrics.com)

[www.online.onetcenter.org](http://www.online.onetcenter.org)

[www.2h.com/tests/personality.phtml](http://www.2h.com/tests/personality.phtml)

# Undecided Oriented Choice..

- Mystical Approach – Take General Education courses and hopefully I will decide on a major



# Deciding on a Major: Steps 1-3

- Step 1: Research education programs

Websites: [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)  
[www.collegesource.com](http://www.collegesource.com)

- Step 2: Research occupations

Websites: [www.careeronestop.org](http://www.careeronestop.org)  
[www.bls.gov/oco/](http://www.bls.gov/oco/)

- Step 3: Reach a decision

Websites: [www.udel.edu/csc](http://www.udel.edu/csc)  
<https://career.berkeley.edu/Major/Major.stm>

## Deciding On A Major: Steps 4-6

- Step 4: Show Initiative - take action
- Step 5: Review decision, schedule counseling appointment, and develop Student Education Plan (SEP)
- Step 6: Set timelines & have alternatives (Primary & Secondary major if applicable)

# Examples: Education Required for Some Occupations

Major/Occupation	Level of Education
Child Development	Certificate (1-2yrs.)
Finance	AA (2yrs.)
Engineering	BS (4yrs.)
Social Worker	MA or MS (1-2yrs.)
Researcher/Professor	Ph.D. (4yrs. or more)
Law School	Professional School

## Reality Check: Major & Career

- Be Realistic – Have realistic expectations for yourself, major, and employment
- Major – Prepare yourself for life after college (intern, volunteer, network, etc.)

Websites: [www.idealists.org](http://www.idealists.org)

[www.internshipprograms.com](http://www.internshipprograms.com)

- Transfer Major – Complete major prep, transfer units, GE's (CSU/IGETC), etc.

Websites: [www.assist.org](http://www.assist.org)

[www.aiccu.edu](http://www.aiccu.edu)

## 5 Top Qualities Employers Look for in Employees

- 1: Integrity/Honesty (Be Reliable & Sincere)
- 2: Strong Work Ethic (Complete Duties & Responsibilities)
- 3: Communication Skills (Be Clear & Coherent-written & spoken)
- 4: Show Initiative (Be Proactive/Self-Starter)
- 5: Interpersonal Skills (Work & relate with others)

# Working World: What to Expect

- Young Adults – On average hold 9 jobs before age 32

(U.S. Department Of Labor, 2000)

- Career – Change about 3 times before retirement [average change every 10yrs]

(American Renaissance: Our Life At The Turn Of The 21<sup>st</sup> Century)

# Career Counseling

- Career Counseling is available on-campus.
- For more information visit the Career/Transfer Center:  
(Student Services Annex)  
Tel: (818) 947 - 2646
- Math STEM Counseling – MS 112A  
Tel: (818) 778 - 5741