

HOW **2** guide:

Selecting a Major

(For students undecided or unsure of their major)

There are a variety of approaches you can take when trying to determine the right major for you. This handout will introduce you to two strategies, as well as some additional activities to help you in this process. Before we begin our discussion on major choice, you should know that students differ widely in their readiness to make this decision. While some students may already know what they want to study, many others haven't necessarily settled on one particular major. So don't feel bad if you haven't figured it all yet.

1) "BEGIN WITH THE END IN MIND" – MYPLAN.COM

What do we mean by this? Let's say a student aspires to a specific career, such as accountant, marine scientist, or nurse. There are certain degrees that are designed to prepare students for those fields. So, the student selects the major that will best prepare him/her for that particular occupation – beginning the career planning process with their goals in mind.

To assist with career exploration, FGCU students can use **MyPlan.com**, a free web-based career planning resource that allows them to take assessments of their skills, interests, personality, and work values, and then see how their patterns of characteristics match with hundreds of different occupations. **Important:** Students must enter the License Code during the MyPlan.com registration process in order to access the assessments for free. The other side of this guide provides a full description of how to use MyPlan.com and the License Code. This resource is available ONLY to FGCU students and alumni.

By the way, some students may be considering an occupation (or graduate degree program) that doesn't have a specific degree prerequisite. Those students will want to consider majors that best develop the skills and knowledge necessary for their goals.

2) INTEREST IN THE MAJOR

Some students select their major based on their interest in that major, but may not necessarily have a specific career in mind. For many of these students, their career goals starts to crystallize as they progress through their coursework and become more knowledgeable of occupations associated with that field. In terms of career planning, many students have found the resource "What Can I Do With This Major?" valuable since it describes the typical career paths associated with many FGCU majors. To access this site, go to <http://enrollment.fgcu.edu/advising/majorexploration.htm>. *Not all FGCU majors are included on this website.*

OTHER CAREER EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES

- We encourage you to conduct "Informational Interviews." These are meetings with professionals in an occupation or field you are interested in to help gain insight as to whether this career may be a good fit for you. This activity will also help ensure your perceptions and expectations of that occupation are accurate. For more information on how to conduct an information interview, go to our homepage, select "Students and Alumni" then "Career Center Handouts."
- If you are unsure of the different degree programs FGCU offers, attend the **Majors Fair** which is held every fall. Check our events calendar for the date, time, and location.
- For many new students, their choice of major emerges over the course of their freshman year, as they have new experiences that interest and intrigue them. Perhaps it is the student who finds she really enjoys "marketing" after being named publicity chair of her student club. Or the student who decides he wants to be a teacher after reading to children as part of his Service Learning hours. Make sure to **get involved** on campus and in the community to broaden your horizons.

FOR FURTHER ASSISTANCE

If you have narrowed down your options and want to discuss them further with a Career Services advisor, make an appointment by contacting **Career Development Services** – contact information at top of page.

If you have completed all the activities listed above and are unable to generate options, feel confused, or find it difficult to make a decision, we encourage you to meet with a career counselor from **Counseling and Psychological Services** to help you through the decision-making process. Appointments can be made by contacting them at caps@fgcu.edu or (239) 590-7950.

HOW **2** guide:

Using MyPlan.com

MyPlan.com is a free web-based career planning resource that allows you to take assessments of your skills, interests, personality, and work values, and then see how those patterns of characteristics match with hundreds of different occupations. This resource is available ONLY to FGCU students and alumni.

Step 1 – Registration

1. Go to www.myplan.com
2. Click on “Account” tab on top right.
3. Click “Create Free Account”
4. Fill out Account Information.
5. Read and agree to the “Terms of Use” and “Privacy Policy”
6. Click “Continue”
7. Where it asks for License Code, enter “54DNUVKZ”*
8. To make results viewable to Reid Lennertz, the FGCU site administrator, click “Share results with license provider.”
9. Click “Submit Registration”

You must register and enter License Code to take free assessments.

*** After June 1st, 2012, contact FGCU Career Center for the new Code**



Step 2 – Assessments

Click on the “Assessment” tab at the top of the page. Each assessment varies in length, but most can be completed within 15 minutes. Each one must be completed once you start it and incomplete tests cannot be saved. Each question must be answered in order – do not skip questions. Once you have completed an assessment it will appear in the “My Reports” folder under “My Portfolio” for you to review. **Be sure to take all four assessments!**

Step 3 – Compare your pattern of personal characteristics to the world of work

In the “My Portfolio” page, you should see your four reports, followed by “Composite Score.” Click “Composite Score” to see the list of corresponding occupations.

1. Where it states “What Level of Education?” select “Level 4: Four Year Degree (College)” and click “Go!” A list of possible occupations will be generated. Near the bottom of the page, next to “Display” select “All.”
2. Review the list. Click on the hyperlinked title of any occupation that seems interesting. This will bring you to a detailed multi-page profile that includes: job descriptions, job requirements, salary and employment data, and related majors or degrees to enter that field.
3. Now, under “What Level of Education?” select “Level 5: Graduate Degree or Higher.” (Near the bottom of the page, next to “Display” select “All.”) Even if your current plan doesn’t involve going to graduate school, it may in the future, so let’s include those occupations for exploratory purposes. Review the list.
4. The goal is for you to identify 4-5 occupations of interest for you to further investigate and assess.

Please keep in mind that MyPlan.com is not intended to tell you what you “should do” as a career. It is a starting point to help you generate options. Ultimately, it is YOUR decision to determine the best career path to pursue.

Step 4 – Supplemental Information

If you are using MyPlan.com because you are undecided about your major, review the handout “**Selecting a Major**” on the other side of this document.