Hello, and welcome to the Thurgood Marshall College Academic Advising New Student Webinar on “A Major Decision: A Resource Guide To Choosing a Major.”

Today we will be sharing the process of choosing a major and how to build confidence behind this choice. We want to start off by emphasizing that you do not have to be officially “Undeclared” to be in this process of committing to a major.

Maybe you have a major but are still exploring other options. We hope that this webinar presentation will be helpful to you regardless of where you are in the process.

The duration of our webinar today will be 60 minutes with time for questions and answers. Please submit your questions throughout the presentation and we will answer them at the end.

Let's get started!
As a student at UC San Diego, you will have General Education requirements, which we’ll be referring to as ‘GEs,’ University, and Major requirements.

Marshall College has specific GE requirements, which you may already be familiar with if you watched our “GE Requirements” video on the New Student Site.

In addition to your GEs, all students must complete certain University requirements. These requirements are the same for all students, regardless of their college affiliation or major choice. A video about “University Requirements” can be found on the New Student Site as well.

Your Major is your chosen area of study. The requirements are determined by departments and programs, and will include at least 12 upper-division courses for a minimum of 48 units.

All students must have a major declared by the time they reach 90 units. This includes units earned from exams offered through AP or IB Programs or from transfer coursework completed at another college.

Remember, you can be any major at any college.
Choosing and committing to a major is highly personal and individualized process that takes time. It’s ok if you don’t have a major picked-out by the end of this webinar or even within your first quarter.

There are many strategies that can help you narrow down your major path.

Today, we’ll explore a few of them.
One way to narrow down which majors might be right for you is to consider your interests and strengths.

Consider the following questions:
- What classes have you enjoyed previously?
- What types of activities excite you?
- What subjects make you curious?

Perhaps you enjoy working with computers and activities that involve creative problem-solving. Maybe you enjoy working in team settings and value connecting with others.

Taking an inventory of your skills, interests, and strengths can help highlight the types of learning you enjoy and will help you make connections to potential areas of study.

Remember your interests can change over time and you should not discount areas where you lack ability just yet. You’ll be able to build those skills during your studies.
• If you are interested in learning more about your strengths, UC San Diego’s Career Center website provides a variety of online tools including personality and strengths-finder assessments.
• You will have the opportunity to discuss your assessment results with a Career Advisor once you are on-campus.
• To access these assessments, visit career.ucsd.edu and click on ‘Browse Assessment Tools’ under the ‘Plan for Your Future’ tab.
• While some find it helpful to focus first on identifying interests and skills in making connections to majors, others find it helpful to start broad by considering career fields.
• Think about the following:
  • What are your career goals?
  • Or what kind of work do you find interesting?
• Let's explore one of these career fields in greater detail.

Questions to think about:
• What are your career goals?
• What kind of work do you find interesting?
• So let’s say you’re interested in medicine.
• UC San Diego’s Health Beat website helps you explore requirements for admissions into medical programs.
• From there, you can explore what majors have some of the pre-health or pre-med requirements built into the curriculum, like Biology or Public Health.
• However, students can plan to complete their pre-health requirements alongside the coursework for any major.
• For example, you can be a History major and be pre-health.
• To learn more about planning for pre-health, visit healthbeat.ucsd.edu.
Pre-health is just one many career paths. There are potentially a variety of majors that can prepare you for any particular career.

- The Career Center can assist you in exploring other career areas like law or business.
- Meet with an advisor at the Career Center or explore your interests online at career.ucsd.edu.
- Remember, just because you are narrowing down major options based on careers doesn’t mean there’s only one potential major for you.
• Now that you have assessed your interests and strengths and/or reflected on career fields, it's time to explore major options.

• Gathering information is a key part of the exploration process and will help you make a more informed decision about your major selection.

• In this next section, we will discuss key resources to consult to further your understanding of major options.
The first step is to review the list of undergraduate majors on TritonLink and highlight any and all departments that interest you.

Make note of any departments that you haven’t heard of or aren’t sure about. You’ll want to research these areas before discounting them as options.

And finally, cross off any departments that you are not interested in.

You can find the list of undergraduate majors by visiting students.ucsd.edu and entering “majors” into the search bar.
As you review options from the list of undergraduate majors, it is important to note that some departments and their majors have limited enrollment, otherwise referred to as “capped.”

Admission into capped majors is contingent on completion of certain screening requirements and is not guaranteed. If you are interested in a capped major, be sure to review the criteria for admission through the department’s website and consult with a department advisor once you are on-campus. A list of capped majors can be found on TritonLink as well. Now that you have narrowed down your list and identified if any are capped, visit the department’s website to learn more about their major offerings, learning objectives and course requirements.
• In addition to the department websites, you can access academic plans for each major at plans.ucsd.edu.
• Academic plans can provide you with perspective on how your schedule might look across your four-year, or even three-year, timeline. These plans will also highlight any overlap between the major and your GE requirements.
• Most of the academic plans also provide details from the academic department regarding course requirements. This section also includes links to the department’s website and Course Catalog entry to provide you with information regarding the specific courses offered by the department.
• Talking to others is a key step in the major exploration process. Discuss your academic interests with friends, family, and mentors.
• Once you are on-campus, you can speak with academic advisors in the department as well as at Marshall College.
• You can also visit the Career Center for guidance on your career goals and interests.
• Additionally, you can use GEs and Elective courses to explore areas of interest.
• Your fall class schedule is designed to help you explore different academic disciplines while satisfying college and university requirements.
• Remember, you don’t have to know for certain which major you’ll pursue yet. You will have plenty of time to explore options and take advantage of campus resources, including meeting with advisors at Marshall College, in the departments, and at the Career Center.

• If you are currently undeclared or have a declared major, but are interested in changing majors, please note that you will not be able to officially declare or change majors until you have enrolled in Fall classes.

• As we mentioned, if you are planning to pursue a capped major, you will need to follow the major’s specific requirements to be considered for the major.

• Students can declare any non-capped major through TritonLink’s ‘Major/Minor’ tool.
• At this time, we will review and answer any incoming questions you may have.
• Please keep in mind that only general questions, which will be available for public review, can be addressed during our session.
• If you have academic questions that are specific to your record or personal situation, you will have the opportunity to contact Marshall Advising through Online Advising.
• Online Advising will be accessible through the New Student Site starting August 19th.