Deciding Whether or Not to Move in a New Direction

The end of the Fall and Spring semesters are typically times when college students consider whether or not to change majors and or change career goal directions. The impetus for making change may come from different sources. Perhaps grades are not sufficient to remain in a particular major. In such a case, grades may not be high due to lack of interest in that major and not seeing how that major may contribute to career goals. Sometimes students change directions because they recognize that their interests and values are not similar to what they perceive are the core aspects of their current major.

Regardless of the reason, the decision to change majors and/or career directions can be exciting, scary, energizing, overwhelming, or all of the above. Many students believe that changing majors is taboo, something that is frowned upon. In fact, 75% of students change majors at least once while in college. Deciding to pursue an area that best fits your interests, goals, values and personality is an important decision and one that should be taken seriously and approached studiously. Why is this so important? Recent studies by the Gallup Organization for the National Career Development Association found the following statistics.

- 69% of adults reported that they would try to get more information about job and career options if they were starting over
- 30% of those surveyed reported that they utilized career counseling through their college or university
- Finally, only 4 in 10 adults reported that their current careers were the result of having a conscious plan, meaning that 60% of people were not proactive in planning for their careers

So, what does this mean for college students, and what resources are available to help them? Hopefully, college students can become more comfortable with seeking assistance in identifying majors and career directions that are a good fit for who they are as individuals. The statistics indicate that there is a need for more deliberate attempts to identify vocational directions in life. The Student Counseling Service has many resources to assist with this process. Through individual or group counseling or utilization of career workshops, students can take career interest inventories as well as assessments that identify their personality styles and career options that may be good fits for them. The Student Counseling Service also has print and on-line resources to help students identify career areas related to different majors as well as labor market information, first-hand information from individuals from different career backgrounds, and other resources to assist in making informed decisions about majors and career opportunities. Having an unbiased counselor available to help students explore the possibility of change can help make the process less overwhelming and more informed. To access services, stop by Cain Hall, register for services online at http://scs.tamu.edu, or call 979-845-4427.
Retrieved from fastweb.com on November 7, 2007

Close your eyes. Picture yourself four years from now, standing in front of friends and family on your graduation day, waiting in line to receive your diploma. As you wait for the line to move forward, you begin to think about the four years you’ve spent at college, how much you’ve experienced, and you say to yourself, “My college experience turned out the way it did because I…”

How will you finish that sentence?

Will you look back on your four years at college with pride? Appreciation? Relief? Regret? Which of the following examples do you hope you’ll be saying to yourself in four years?

“My college experience turned out the way it did because I…
...took a class in a subject I knew absolutely nothing about.”
...learned a ton from my professors outside the classroom.”
...studied abroad in an amazing country.”
...learned a foreign language.”
...took a course because I thought it would be fun.”
...took a course because I heard the professor was hilarious, even though it wasn’t in my major.”
...picked a major for personal reasons.”
...picked a major for financial reasons.”
...picked a major for the reason that I didn’t know what else to choose.”
...learned how to challenge ideas and be a better communicator.”
...wore pajamas to class ”
...avoided a professor who I heard was lousy.”
...didn’t skip a single class.”
...skipped too many classes.”
...skipped so many classes, I now wonder why I went to college in the first place.”
...fell in love with a subject that I’ll spend the rest of my life exploring.”
...learned to play a musical instrument.”
...performed in a play.”
...got a ton out of my education, but still had fun.”
...wasn’t afraid to speak my mind.”
...joined a sorority/fraternity because I wanted to.”
...joined a sorority/fraternity because my friends wanted me to.”
...got along great with my roommates.”
...loved living in a single.”
...volunteered at least once to make a difference in my community.”
...had a steady boyfriend/girlfriend.”
...dated lots of different people and learned a lot about myself.”
...dated lots of different people and ended up back where I started.”
...played in an intramural sport where I scored the winning points/runs/goals.”
...took part in a large-scale prank (harmless, of course!).”
...stayed in touch with old high school friends.”
...didn’t let fear hold me back from doing something I loved to do.”
...sang karaoke in front of people I didn’t know.”
...hosted a radio show or webcast.”
...became really good at pool and darts. Maybe a little too good.”
...took part in all the cool things my campus had to offer.”
...did my own thing off campus.”
...took a chance and did something to make everyone I know say, “I can’t believe you had the guts to do that!”

The author Henry Miller once said, “One’s destination is never a place, but rather a new way of looking at things.” Sometimes picturing our goals and where we’d like to end up can help us figure out what we want.

**FREE Workshops for Student Employees**

The Student Employment Office in the Department of Student Financial Aid offers FREE Training Workshops for both student employees and their supervisors. Topics for supervisors range from “Work Study Basics” to “Supervising Students” which gives specific resources for hiring, motivating and retaining student employees. Students can enhance their skills in telephone courtesy, time management, and business communication to name a few. A complete list of Workshops and information on registration can be found at https://financialaid.tamu.edu/workshops/. Don’t hesitate to take advantage of these FREE training opportunities for you and your student employees. For additional information or to schedule a training tailored to your office, contact the Student Employment Office at 845-0686 or email jobsforaggies@tamu.edu.

**Workshop Calendar**

**November**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Workshop</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/14</td>
<td>2:00 - 3:00 pm</td>
<td>Finding a Balance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/16</td>
<td>10:30 - 11:30 am</td>
<td>Presentation Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/27</td>
<td>2:00 - 3:00 pm</td>
<td>Finding a Balance</td>
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**December**

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<th>Time</th>
<th>Workshop</th>
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<tr>
<td>12/03</td>
<td>1:30 - 2:30 pm</td>
<td>Presentation Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/04</td>
<td>2:30 - 3:30 pm</td>
<td>Preparing for the Global Workplace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/11</td>
<td>2:30 - 3:30 pm</td>
<td>Preparing for the Global Workplace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/17</td>
<td>2:00 - 3:00 pm</td>
<td>Quality Customer Service</td>
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Continued from October 2007


Step 4: Choose a program and complete the online Texas A&M Study Abroad application related to your program type via the application portal: http://studyabroad.tamu.edu/application.asp.

Per the application instructions, obtain signatures (if needed) and return the application to the Texas A&M Study Abroad Programs Office (1st floor, Bizzell Hall West).

Step 5: Once your program application has been approved by TAMU, complete any additional applications/paperwork and return that on or before any deadlines indicated by the program liaison (i.e. application and acceptance forms for independent study abroad transfer credit program).

Step 6: Obtain a Study Abroad Budget Request form from the Study Abroad Office and bring it into the financial aid office so your COA (Budget) may be increased.

Welcome to Aggieland!
Now Go Away!

Study Abroad at Texas A&M University
Learn all about it!

November 27, 2007
3:30 pm
MSC 292 B

Here’s why you should attend:
- Learn about the many study abroad opportunities available at Texas A&M.
- Listen to firsthand experience from a regent scholar who recently studied abroad and how she funded her study abroad experience.
- Learn about financial aid options to help pay for your study abroad program.

E-Mail Etiquette


When using e-mail, please adopt these simple points of good practice and etiquette.

Remember the laws of the land relating to written communication apply equally to email, including laws on defamation, copyright, obscenity, fraud and discrimination.

Remember that the Intranet is an open world - treat the security of email messages you send off-campus about the same as a postcard (i.e. anyone along the chain of distribution might see what you have written). Even for within-campus messages, think carefully before sending sensitive or confidential information by email.

Make a good impression - your email may be seen by persons who don’t know you or the University, so ensure that what you write and how you write it gives the reader the right impression.

Be polite - adhere to the same standards as you would when writing a letter. If you TYPE LIKE THIS, for example, people will think you are shouting. Swear-words are a complete ‘no no’, even if you might use such words in conversation with the person to whom you are sending the email.

Use humor and sarcasm with care - not everyone will appreciate it and without voice inflection and body language, mail messages can be easily misinterpreted. It sometimes helps to use ‘emoticons’ such as a smiley face (e.g. :-) ) but use them sparingly.

Don’t ‘Flame’ - Flames are messages or replies that express anger or might anger the reader. Don’t get involved in flame wars. Neither post nor respond to incendiary mail.

Keep it simple - email is good for factual information, but not for matters that require tact and diplomacy. People are busy - don’t add to their information overload.

Identify yourself - you can use a signature file to put your name at the end of your email automatically (but it’s good etiquette to keep it short).

Ensure your email is going to the right destination - it can be easy to use the wrong email address by mistake and your message may be delivered to the wrong person or group. If you do find a message has been misdelivered, send an apology to the person or to the group.

Check your reply settings - it is easy to use “Reply-All” by mistake, and this could be very embarrassing for you and very annoying to others.

Use a meaningful ‘subject’ field - don’t leave it blank; this is very irritating.

Clear out your mailbox regularly - there is limited space in your mailbox. Old mail will be moved aside if you go over quota. Move messages you want to keep into mail folders.