

Undeclared/Exploratory

Students often choose to enter college without a declared major but with the goal of exploring various academic and career opportunities. At NDSU those students are served through the Advising Resource Center (ARC), whose mission is to guide academic exploration, provide advising services to undeclared/exploratory students, and support academic and career exploration.

Working one-on-one with an academic advisor in the ARC, students choose one of five Exploratory Areas to guide their academic choices. Exploratory Areas are collections of majors at NDSU that can lead to careers in related fields. The five Exploratory Areas are listed below; for a full list of majors included in each Area, visit the Advising Resource Center (https://www.ndsu.edu/advising_resource_center/exploratory_students/exploratory_areas).

- Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (https://www.ndsu.edu/advising_resource_center/exploratory_students/exploratory_areas/stem_and_applied_sciences) – an Area for students interested in how and why things work or who enjoy using facts and figures to create innovative solutions to issues in fields like science, engineering and agriculture.
- Health & Life Sciences (https://www.ndsu.edu/advising_resource_center/exploratory_students/exploratory_areas/health_and_life_sciences) – an Area for students fascinated by science and medicine, who enjoy solving problems and investigating the unknown. Ideal for students interested in a health field by becoming a practitioner or researching, creating and promoting health-related products and information.
- Social Science, Human Services & Education (https://www.ndsu.edu/advising_resource_center/exploratory_students/exploratory_areas/social_science_human_services_education) – an Area for students who want to work in education and other people-oriented, helping fields. Teaching, counseling and advising are just some of the common traits.
- Liberal Arts, Communication & Design (https://www.ndsu.edu/advising_resource_center/exploratory_students/exploratory_areas/liberal_arts_communication_design) – an Area for students interested in the arts, theory, history and design. Fits well with those who enjoy designing something new and being creative with music, art and language.
- Business Studies (https://www.ndsu.edu/advising_resource_center/exploratory_students/exploratory_areas/business_studies) – an Area for students interested in working within a variety of settings like corporate offices or non-profit organizations. Leadership, analysis, marketing and persuasion are just a few characteristics common to this Area.

ARC staff will confirm a student's choice of Exploratory Area during summer orientation and use it to help build the most appropriate course schedule, incorporating academic interests and goals. Students are encouraged to take 15-16 credits each semester that include general education requirements as well as a course to explore a major of interest. ARC advisors maintain a list of courses that can either serve as an introduction to a particular major or as a foundational course in that major's curriculum and work with students to select exploratory options.

Students may declare a major – or change their current major to undeclared so they can broadly explore their academic options – whenever they feel confident in doing so. Most students declare a major by the time they have completed approximately 45 credits or about three semesters of classwork.

For further information, contact:

Advising Resource Center (https://www.ndsu.edu/advising_resource_center)

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