

MAJORS

The Majors module includes four counseling lesson plans focused on helping students explore various areas of study.

Lesson Plans:

- MA1: In “Majors and Disciplines,” students draw connections between their current course work and college-level academic disciplines. They then choose one of the six disciplines to investigate further.
- MA2: In “Majors: Planning Ahead,” students read about the undergraduate academic experience in three majors and identify their prerequisites, using what they learn to make plans, both curricular and extracurricular, for their remaining high-school years.
- MA3: In “Evaluating Majors,” students identify three college majors in which they have an interest and consider them in terms of their future goals and their current activities.
- MA4: In “Using Majors to Explore Colleges,” students use MyRoad’s Find a College feature, as well as college Web sites, to compare academic offerings at different colleges and to prepare to visit or contact those of particular interest.

Overall Objectives:

- Students will use what they learn about themselves and their interests to evaluate the suitability of various majors and colleges to their own personality and situation.
- Students will learn about the types and fields of study offered at the college level.
- Students will develop planning skills as they chart a course for the rest of their high-school curriculum with a mind toward preparing for their postsecondary education.

Lesson MA1: Majors and Disciplines

Goals	This lesson will assist students draw connections between their current course work and college-level academic disciplines. They will then choose one of the six disciplines to investigate further.
Suggested Grade Level	9 th or early 10 th
Student Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn about the way fields of study are grouped in larger disciplines and about the characteristics and requirements of one of those disciplines. • Consider whether or not the discipline is well suited to their skills and learning styles.
Counselor Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check on students' adjustment to high school and see if they understand what's expected of them. • Learn about academic areas of particular interest to your students.
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Majors start page • Explore Majors • Task Analysis (Worksheet MA1-A) • Investigating a Discipline (Worksheet MA1-B)
Student Assignment (15 minutes)	<p>Students complete the Task Analysis worksheet.</p> <p>Step 3 on the worksheet requires that students have access to MyRoad and can be completed before step 2 if more convenient.</p> <p><i>If it's not possible for students to complete the Task Analysis worksheet before class, they can complete it during the class as part of your discussion.</i></p>

Lesson MA1: Majors and Disciplines (continued)

<p>Classroom Discussion (15 minutes)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss the Majors start page with students. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do your students think it means to major in a subject? How are the majors arranged on this page? What is an academic discipline? • Are there any majors here that your students haven't heard of? What do they think students in that major study? What careers do your students think people in this major pursue? • Which of these majors have your students already begun to study? 2. Draw connections between students' current schedules and college majors by reviewing the Task Analysis worksheet. If students have not completed it, have them do so during your discussion. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What kind of work is involved in the high-school classes that your students have listed on their worksheet? • Of the tasks listed, which are their favorite class? Which do they like least? Why? • What is each of your students' favorite class? Their least favorite? Why? • Which tasks do your students feel they are best at? How does this affect their performance in and enjoyment of their classes? 3. Make connections between college majors and academic disciplines. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss any classes or extracurricular activities that students were unable to classify according to discipline. • If possible, look at two classes that are classified under the same discipline and discuss their similarities by looking at the tasks associated with each. • Your students can also look at the contrasts between two classes that are in different disciplines. 4. Explain the Investigating a Discipline worksheet and help students decide which disciplines and majors to investigate after the class.
<p>After Class (1 hour)</p>	<p>Students complete the Investigating a Discipline worksheet.</p> <p>They will need access to MyRoad.</p> <p><i>The worksheet guides students through an exploration of Majors and provides an area for them to write notes about the sections in this feature.</i></p>

Lesson MA1: Majors and Disciplines (continued)**Optional**

If possible, use a follow-up class to discuss students' completed Investigating a Discipline worksheets.

- After investigating these majors, what did your students discover?
- What do they have in common? How are they different?
- Based on what your students have learned so far, how would they describe this academic discipline?
- Can your students imagine themselves pursuing this discipline in college? Why or why not?

Lesson MA2: Majors - Planning Ahead

Goals	Within this lesson, students read about the undergraduate academic experience in three majors and identify their prerequisites, using what they learn to make plans, both curricular and extracurricular, for their remaining high-school years.
Suggested Grade Level	9 th or 10 th
Student Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the background needed for majors of interest. • Develop academic planning skills and start building a planning portfolio.
Counselor Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect information on students' academic and extracurricular activities and goals. • Build a record of students' plans for classes, tests, and other activities.
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore Majors: Academic Experience and My Majors • I.D. Me: ORA Personality Profiler® (recommended majors list) • I.D. Me: Majors QuickStart (recommended majors list) • School Plan (Worksheet MA2-A) • Standardized Test Calendar (Worksheet MA2-B) • Extracurricular Activities (Worksheet MA2-C)
Student Assignment (15 minutes)	<p>Students create a short list of majors of interest on MyRoad.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the ORA Personality Profiler® and/or the Majors QuickStart have been completed, students can use the work lists generated by these tools as a starting point. • Students can also create or add to their list of majors by using the My Interest feature located in each major in Explore Majors. <p><i>If students have not taken the ORA Personality Profiler® or the QuickStart, have them generate a list of majors using the My Interest feature in Explore Majors as part of your class discussion.</i></p>

Lesson MA2: Majors - Planning Ahead (continued)

Classroom Discussion (30 minutes)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Using MyRoad, connect to the Academic Experience section of the first major on the student's list and discuss what they find there. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there standard prerequisites for this major? What level will your students need to attain in math, science, foreign language, and English in order to enter college? • How many years does this major tend to take from start to finish? • Are there a lot of required courses, or does the major focus on electives? 2. Now compare this major to the second major on the students' lists, using the same process. Look at as many of the selected majors as time allows. 3. Ask your students to each choose one major or a group of majors with similar requirements and to think about how high school can serve as a preparation for this major. They should use the School Plan and the Standardized Test Calendar worksheets to take notes during the class discussion. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will the classes that they're taking now help them when it comes time to study this major? What classes will they need to take before they graduate? • Are there any AP/SAT II exams that your students will need to take or that will help them place out of prerequisites? <p><i>This is a good opportunity to check in with students about their academic performance.</i></p>
After Class	Students and counselors both retain copies of the School Plan, Standardized Test Calendar, and Extracurricular Activities worksheets.
Optional	Discuss other ways in which your students might further investigate and prepare for their majors of interest. Use the Extracurricular Activities worksheet to take notes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there extracurricular activities, such as internships, summer jobs, school clubs, or volunteer positions that will help them build a foundation for these fields? • What are some books they would like to read on these fields? • Are there alumni or parents at their school who have experience in these fields?

Lesson MA3: Evaluating Majors

Goals	Students, with this lesson, will identify three college majors in which they have an interest and consider them in terms of their future goals and their current activities.
Suggested Grade Level	11 th or 12 th
Student Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn self-assessment skills. • Research and evaluate college majors in preparation for selecting one.
Counselor Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather material that will serve as the basis for writing letters of recommendation.
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I.D. Me • College Majors • My Plan • Majors Preparation (Worksheet MA3-A) • Majors Interest (Worksheet MA3-B)
Student Assignment (30 minutes)	<p>If students have not yet taken the Majors QuickStart and the ORA Personality Profiler®, they should do so in preparation for this class. Completing both will add about 45 minutes to the preparation time.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students should review the majors suggested by the Majors QuickStart and the ORA Personality Profiler® and check ones of particular interest so that those are saved to My Plan. 2. Students should choose three of these majors and use them as the basis for completing the Majors Interest worksheet. <p><i>Before the class, the educator can review student's preferred majors in My Plan, if it is shared.</i></p>
Classroom Discussion (15-30 minutes)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss the majors used in the Majors Interest worksheet. If students have not completed it yet, have them do so during the class. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What majors are of particular interest, and why? • Are they related or do they cover a broad range? • Is there one major that stands out as most appealing?

Lesson MA3: Evaluating Majors (continued)

2. Make a connection between the majors and students' high-school experiences.
 - Have your students taken courses in the subject(s) so as to put their interests into practice?
 - Have they taken the necessary high-school courses to have a background in and meet college prerequisites for the subject of interest?
3. Discuss the connection between students' personalities and the majors explored.
 - Do these majors correspond with those suggested by the Majors QuickStart and the ORA Personality Profiler®?
 - If not, any ideas about the root of this discrepancy?
4. Discuss the relationship between majors and careers or other long-term goals.
 - How do these majors fit in with your students' long-term goals, as identified in My Plan?
 - How many of the goals listed on their Majors Interest worksheets relate to career plans or goals?
5. Supplementary issues to discuss if time permits include the following:
 - Do the types of work required by these majors fit with your students' general way of thinking and studying?
 - How do these majors fit in with their general interests and extracurriculars?
6. Assign the Majors Preparation worksheet.

If the students are in 11th grade, this worksheet and class can be more oriented toward selecting courses for spring semester of junior year and senior year. If the students are in 12th grade, the worksheet and class can be oriented toward reviewing courses taken and assessing how well preparation and future plans for college correspond.

After Class
(45 minutes)

Students complete the Majors Preparation worksheet.

In addition, you may recommend that students continue their exploration of majors by reading more in Explore Majors about the few majors that are of greatest interest.

Lesson MA3: Evaluating Majors (continued)

	<p>Recommended activities on MyRoad include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expanding goals description and journal entries in My Plan based on the class discussion.• Reading Undergraduate Study in the Academics section of Explore Majors to see what high-school preparation is recommended for majors of interest. If students haven't yet taken a few courses in the subject, encourage them to do so the following semester.
Optional	If possible, use the Majors Preparation worksheet as the basis for a follow-up class to further discuss your students' planning and preparation for choosing a college major.

Lesson MA4: Using Majors to Explore Colleges

Goals	This lesson will ask students to use MyRoad's Find a College feature, as well as college Web sites, to compare academic offerings at different colleges and to prepare to visit or contact those of particular interest.
Suggested Grade Level	11 th through 12 th (early fall)
Student Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gain a better understanding of the strengths of different schools in majors of interest. • Prepare for college visits and/or phone interviews.
Counselor Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn about students' academic goals and use this information to help students refine their lists of colleges to consider. • Build a general knowledge base about the strengths and weaknesses of a variety of schools.
Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore Majors: Overviews, Topics, and My Majors. • Majors Offered (Worksheet MA4-A) • Using Campus Web Sites (Worksheet MA4-B)
Student Assignment	Students should come to the class with short lists of college majors of interest, which can be generated through the Majors QuickStart, the ORA Personality Profiler®, or the students' independent explorations of the Explore Majors profiles.
Classroom Discussion (30 minutes)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Complete and discuss the Majors Offered worksheet. Students should <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose a few majors from the interest list. • Choose three schools that they know of. <p><i>Encourage students to choose schools that vary considerably: for example, a small, private, liberal-arts college; a large public university; and a medium-sized state college or alternative school.</i></p>

Lesson MA4: Using Majors to Explore Colleges (continued)

2. Help students find the following information for each school:
 - On the General Information page, what is the ratio of faculty to students (this appears in the descriptive paragraph at the bottom of the page)? Are there graduate programs (in other words, is it possible that teaching assistants, instead of faculty, would teach their courses)?
 - On the Academic Program page, does the school have programs that correspond to their majors of interest?
3. If a school that interests a student does not seem to have a program in a major of interest, or if the student shows exceptional interest in a particular school, click on the Campus Home Page button at the bottom of the right-hand column on the General Information page. Otherwise, choose a school at random and discuss the following:
 - Where do your students think they can find information on majors on this Web site?
 - If the MyRoad Academic Program page didn't show their major, is there a way to search the school's site to make sure that it really doesn't exist?
4. Once students have located the department pages for their majors of interest, they should fill out the Using Campus Web Sites worksheet. Help students answer the following questions:
 - How many professors teach in this department? Of those, how many are full-time faculty? Do they list their research interests or their publications?
 - What kinds of courses are offered? Which ones sound interesting to your students? Is there anything here they did not expect to see? Anything they don't see that they did expect?

Students who have not spent much time with the Explore Majors feature may find that real academic departments do not correspond very well to their idea of what a major is about. Direct them toward the Explore Majors feature, and encourage them to compare the course offerings in the departments that interest them to the descriptions of topics within each major.

Lesson MA4: Using Majors to Explore Colleges (continued)

After Class	<p>Students can spend time using the Find a College feature on MyRoad to follow up on the majors and schools of interest and to complete the Using Campus Web Sites worksheet for as many schools as they like.</p> <p><i>For students interested in two-year colleges, the campus Web site exploration will provide a far greater depth of information on programs available than will the Academic Programs page on MyRoad, which is currently structured around four-year college majors.</i></p>
Optional	<p>If a follow-up class is possible, review the Using Campus Web Sites worksheet to help students prepare for and plan college visits or telephone interviews.</p> <p>For students planning college visits, faculty members and courses of interest can be incorporated into the visit plan. Encourage them to call ahead if they want to meet with particular professors or sit in on particular courses. Discuss with students questions they may want to ask the faculty with whom they meet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What courses does the professor plan to teach in the next few years? Will he or she be on leave at any time in the near future?• Are there any books or articles that the professor would recommend that you read to prepare for college?• Does the professor ever need undergraduates as research assistants? If so, what kind of work does that involve?• What does the professor think is the most important skill for students in this major?

Investigating a Discipline

1. Log on to MyRoad and click on the Explore Majors tab.
2. Choose one of the six disciplines listed on the start page and write it in the top row. If you'd like to learn more about academic disciplines, read these Resource Library articles: "Categorizing Majors," "Interdisciplinary Majors," and "Humanities Majors."
3. Choose two of the majors within that discipline and list them in row two.
4. For each major, read the sections on MyRoad that are listed in column one.
5. On the chart below, record your reactions to what you read.

Discipline:		
Major		
Overview		
Topics		
Academics: Undergraduate Study		
Career Connection		
Perspectives (You don't have to read all sections, but start with Hitting the Books and Obstacle Course.)		

School Plan

9th Grade

Field	Course Title (Teacher)	Required?
English/Writing and Composition		
History/Social Studies		
Math		
Science and Health		
Foreign Language		
Elective/P.E.		
Elective		

10th Grade

Field	Course Title (Teacher)	Required?
English/Writing and Composition		
History/Social Studies		
Math		
Science and Health		
Foreign Language		
Elective/P.E.		
Elective		

School Plan (continued)

11th Grade

Field	Course Title (Teacher)	Required?
English/Writing and Composition		
History/Social Studies		
Math		
Science and Health		
Foreign Language		
Elective/P.E.		
Elective		

12th Grade

Field	Course Title (Teacher)	Required?
English/Writing and Composition		
History/Social Studies		
Math		
Science and Health		
Foreign Language		
Elective/P.E.		
Elective		

Standardized Test Calendar

10th Grade

Month	Test	Date	Registration Deadline
August			
September			
October			
November			
December			
January			
February			
March			
April			
May			
June			

11th Grade

Month	Test	Date	Registration Deadline
August			
September			
October			
November			
December			
January			
February			
March			
April			
May			
June			

12th Grade

Month	Test	Date	Registration Deadline
August			
September			
October			
November			
December			
January			
February			
March			
April			
May			
June			

Extracurricular Activities

Internship opportunities:

Company/organization	
Address	
Contact information	
Application deadline	
Notes (duration, compensation, etc.)	

Company/organization	
Address	
Contact information	
Application deadline	
Notes (duration, compensation, etc.)	

Other activities you'd like to pursue

Sports	
Clubs	
Summer jobs	
Volunteer work	

Extracurricular Activities (continued)

Mentors in your community who can help you learn more about the fields that interest you:

Name	
Position	
Contact information	
Notes	

Name	
Position	
Contact information	
Notes	

Name	
Position	
Contact information	
Notes	

Books and journals that will help you learn more about the fields that interest you:

Title	
Author	
Why read it?	

Title	
Author	
Why read it?	

Majors Preparation

In the left-hand column of each table, list three majors of particular interest to you. In the middle column, list all the courses you have taken or plan to take that relate to that major. In the right-hand column, list when you took or plan to take that course. See the example provided in row 2.

Major	Courses taken in major field	Year taken/planned
<i>English</i>	<i>Survey of World Literature</i>	<i>Sophomore year (fall 2000)</i>
1.		
2.		
3.		

Majors Interest

In the left-hand column of the table, list three majors of particular interest to you. In the middle column, list all the activities you have participated in or currently participate in that relate to that major. In the right-hand column, list the long-term goals you have that relate to that major – for example, career paths you may want to follow or volunteer work that you foresee playing a big role in your future. See the example provided in row two.

Major	Activities that relate to major	Goals that relate to major
English	<i>Literary-magazine editor</i>	<i>Teach writing to kids</i>
1.		
2.		
3.		

Majors Offered

Before your counseling appointment, choose four majors in which you have an interest and write them in the first row of the table. During your appointment, you'll investigate 3 different schools to compare their academic offerings.

School	Faculty/student ratio	Graduate programs	Major 1:	Major 2:	Major 3:	Major 4:
			If you don't find the exact major you're looking for, list alternative names instead. Use the spaces below to make notes.			

Using Campus Web Sites

1. Choose a school to explore in greater depth. Pick a school that doesn't appear to offer a major that interests you, or else pick a school in which you're especially interested.
2. Click on the Campus Home Page button at the bottom of the right sidebar on the school's General Information page on MyRoad.
3. Find the departmental Web page for a major that interests you. If you are searching for a major that didn't appear on MyRoad's Academic Program page, use the search feature on the school's site or explore departments you think might be related.
4. Fill out the following table for all of the majors that interest you at this school. (You can make copies of this sheet to research multiple schools.)

School name:

Department	Number of faculty	Interesting courses	Professors I'd like to meet
			Name: Contact info:
			Name: Contact info: