

Undeclared? Be Prepared!

By *Brittany Lam; Arianna Brouillette Spraker; Riley Balitsaris AND Ami Lin*

Going into university as an undeclared freshman can be extremely intimidating. It is very stressful choosing what you would like to major in. However, you are not alone at all. There are many others that feel exactly the same way you do. The faculty and students are here to help guide and offer you the help you need, don't be afraid to reach out and ask for help! Some amazing upperclassmen offered essential tips and suggestions from their own experiences being a freshman with an undeclared major.

Starting freshman year of college as an undeclared student obtains both advantages and disadvantages. A big advantage for undeclared students is the fact that they can use freshman year to take general education courses and build a strong GPA. If the student has exceptional grades by the time they wish to declare a major, it is very likely that that student will be able to immediately enter into that major. On the other hand, a major disadvantage would be

if an undeclared student were to wait too long to declare their major. They end up having to cram in all the major-required classes in a short time. It is very popular for students to enter college as undeclared, because it is rare for an 18-year-old to know exactly what they would like to study. Some students that have a general idea may pick an interesting major and still ends up switching out of it. This can prove to be problematic and time consuming. Entering college as an undeclared major is a good choice because students can bring up their grades, and eventually choose what they would like to study with a clear mind through thorough thought.

It is easy to feel overwhelmed as an undeclared student. There are so many majors, classes to choose from, and directions to go— how does one decide all this when they have no idea what career they want? Our undeclared panelists gave the unanimous advice to get involved. Joining clubs and organizations is a great way to get a feel for what path one might take. Even if one decides that the club is not for them, at least he knows what he is not passion about. Another piece of advice given was to look at a list of majors and cross off the ones that are of no interest. Although there will still

be a lot of options, it is helpful to narrow it down, even if it only a little bit. SDSU offers countless resources—counselors, workshops, and even classes to help find a career path. Naomi Marroquin, sophomore at SDSU, mentioned that talking to major advisors and teachers helped her get a feel for what each field is really about.

Not only does SDSU offer numerous opportunities in school for students who are undeclared, but there are outside beneficial resources and extracurricular activities that these students can use. State currently has over 200 clubs on campus which ranges from academics, cultural, leadership, athletics and more. Because there are multiple organizations to choose from, there's always going to be at least one club for everyone. Being involved on campus by joining an organization is a wonderful way to network, make new friends, learn new things, or receive help for your major. A current SDSU student, Linda Dawood, who is a Business Marketing major, explains that she “joined different organizations and activities [that were] directed towards [her] major.” Another student, Beth Bushey who is also a Business Marketing major states that she became involved in a co-ed Business Fraternity where she found other students with similar interests. This fraternity became a stepping stone in helping

her head into the right direction. She describes that “asking others about potential jobs for the major was helpful.” After receiving feedback, Beth had a better understanding of what she could do and what she wants to do in the future.

So don't be discouraged in choosing undeclared major when entering the university! Remember that the faculty and upperclassmen are here to help you to not only declare your major, but also to further enhance your university life!



I'm Undeclared And That's Okay!!!

By: Jon Soden, Daniel Shabsin, Camille Maccan, Ethan Lee

September 15, 2017

Being an undeclared student often times comes with feelings of being behind, being rushed to choose a major, and concerns for graduating on time. While many people believe that to be true, they are simply not looking at the situation the right way! Studies have shown that up to 75% of people in college change their major at least once before graduating. Being undeclared allows students to have a unique opportunity to explore different majors and see what classes best interest them. Often there is also additional advising made available for undeclared students. With this being said, the best thing to remember is that you are not alone!

Beth Bushey is a second year student that is now a declared marketing major. Some of her advice for helping decide on a major includes talking to professors about jobs in the field, going to club meetings for the major, and eliminating majors that you know you do not want to pursue.

Linda Dawood is a marketing major who declared the second semester of her sophomore year. Linda suggests joining many campus organizations as well as meeting advisors for many different majors. She also thinks it is very beneficial to be undeclared because it gives you the freedom to explore many different options and paths.

Kylie Carpenter declared psychology as her major during the second semester of her freshmen year. She stresses the advice of reaching out and talking to advisors, as they have a lot of help to offer. Advisors of all majors are happy to help and can bring clarity oftentimes as to which classes to choose. Kylie also brings to light the importance of attending workshops, as they can definitely have an influence on students' academic situations.

Naomi Marroquin is a criminal justice major who recently declared over this past summer. To help her decide what major, she used the SDSU major map and explored what specific classes were needed for each major. After she declared her major, she joined the Criminal Justice Student Association. Naomi explained how getting involved helps you meet people with the same interests as you and also gets you to make connections.

Paige Valiukas decided to declare her major in international relations. She mostly focused on GE's and explored her options. She suggested to take classes that interest you and to remember that you don't have to rush into declaring a major.

Ariana De Santi is still an undeclared student. She has been exploring and thinking about declaring her major in hospitality. In her opinion, the hardest part about being an undeclared student was having to choose classes. But thanks to the various mentors made available to her and the amazing professors she was able to talk with, she feels as though she is ready to declare.

"Twenty years from now, you will be more disappointed by the things you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So, throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore, dream, discover." -Mark Twain

By Sophia Collins, Stephanie Dutra, Brian Duong, & Maria Kusior

GEN S-280
SDSU Class of 2021



Life of an Undeclared Student

When meeting new people, especially on campus, one of the first questions typically asked is “what’s your major?” This can sometimes be an awkward conversation as you respond “I’m undeclared because I’m not exactly sure what I want to do yet”. However, going into college undeclared is the best option, considering most people end up changing their majors early in their college careers anyways. By coming in undeclared, were were offered the chance to take General Studies- Intro to Civic Engagement, which provides undeclared students with the opportunity explore a variety of study fields, and learn more about the benefits of not yet declaring a major. Our class had the opportunity to interview a panel of past undeclared students, and get their input on how life as an undeclared student is worthwhile.

Meet the Panelists: Beth Bushy, Linda Dawood, Naomi Marroquin, & Arianna DeSanti

Question: If you have declared a major, what steps did you take to do so?

BB: I declared to be a marketing major. To get there I interviewed and talked to business professors and went to club meetings aimed at that major for more information.

LD: I declared marketing, and joined different organizations centered around marketing. I based my major off of what I enjoyed and my interests.

AD: I hope to declare hospitality management later this week. I took exploratory classes and tested out different fields to find out what I wanted to do.

Q: What are some advantages of being undeclared?

NM: There are so many opportunities between all the workshops and resources offered for guidance into choosing what you want to do.

LD: Students who go into school with a declared major often wind up switching anyways and often fall behind. By going in undeclared, you can explore different options and pick any path you want to pursue.

Q: Any advice on academics/advising?

BB: My Maps is such a helpful and useful tool to help choose a major you’re interested in and to find out what pre-major requirements there are. The General Catalog is also helpful to get a description of the classes before you sign up.

AD: Definitely take advantage of the workshops offered; they’re there to help you!

Q: If you could give your freshman self any advice, what would it be?

BB: Get more involved! Go out and join different organizations on campus.

NM: I agree with getting involved! Looking forward to the future, it is all about who you know and what connections you make/have that will open plenty of doors for opportunity!

Kylie Osborne
Sierra Kriss
Brent De La Cruz

Success for the Undeclared

Worries About Registering as Undeclared:

Applying to a school as undeclared may seem daunting. Often times some worries come to mind like, "Will I graduate on time? Will I waste my time in classes I won't need? How long will it be before I find the right major? Will I find the right major?" While these are legitimate questions, with the right guidance, there is little to worry about. To graduate on time, it's just a matter of getting your general education classes out of the way while looking for your major. To avoid taking classes you don't need, first make sure they suffice your general education, then look to see if the class you want is a prerequisite for a major you're interested in. Finding the right major goes hand in hand with following and pursuing your passion. If you don't know what your passion is and you haven't found it yet, there are many programs at campuses that help get students involved in civic engagement. Clubs are a great way to meet to people and explore activities that expand your horizons. With many resources at hand, registering as undeclared freshman year may even give you an upper hand in that many people often decide to change their major anyway. Declaring a major then deciding to change it is what can lead to taking classes you don't need and not graduating on time.

Tips for Undeclared Students:

To make the most out of being undeclared, you should get involved in as many clubs and activities you can. Go to all the meetings as they will help you in things like picking classes for next semester or you can talk to professors from different majors. Talk to other students in different majors to see what interests them about their major. If you are having trouble picking a major, look on MAP of your Web portal and cross off all the majors you know do not interest you and start narrowing down from there.

Advice for the Future:

As you head into your second semester of freshman year, keep in mind the opportunities that are accessible to you. After attending workshops, mentors and advisors hope to lead you into success for your future. These workshops will lead to new possibilities and even ideas of what you may consider your major to be. Use your freshman year to open your horizons and explore the GE classes to your advantage. By taking classes across the board that you may be interested in will not only narrow down which major you might choose but it will also knock out your GE's which you have to take regardless. Heading into your sophomore year, upperclassmen have said to have multiple backup plans on what your schedule might be. Be prepared for your orientation date and look through the catalog. Although it might seem like it's coming so fast and you have yet to choose your major, just remember that you are still getting the same amount of units as everyone else just not in the same order. As oppose to declared students, they will be taking GE's with prerequisite according to their majors. You will be taking GE's then taking all of your major courses at once. Just because you are doing things different doesn't mean it's wrong. Remember you will be successful just make sure you use what is given to you to your advantage to become the best student you can be.

Olivia Dawson
Ryan Murray
Don Poyaoan
Calvin Varias

Advice for Undeclared Freshman

What does it mean to be undeclared, you may ask? Just as we chanted during orientation, “we don’t know” what we want. Our group took time to interview previously undeclared SDSU freshman and gathered as much advice and information as we could.

General Advice

Here’s some general tips that panelists shared about their freshman experiences.

- Visit advisers (both undeclared and potential majors) often, Linda Dawood voiced: “I still learn something new every time I visit Paul in his office”
- Get involved on campus, make new friends and connections
- Always have a backup plan or two for your planned class schedule, check the portal regularly as registration approaches
- Make use of what should be your best friend, the degree evaluation

Resources That Helped Pick A Major

As incoming freshman, let's face it, we are lost. The panelists admit they were too, at one point, and shared what they used to pick a major.

- Take classes and GEs in fields that you’re interested in
- Join organizations on campus relating to your interests or for a major you're interested in, talk to your peers in that major
- Take wide range of GEs to narrow down your interests
- Look at various online major MAPs
- Speak to the advisers for the major: “All of the advisors are happy to help you” Beth Bushey said

Advantages/ Disadvantages

In general, the panelists did not see any disadvantages of being an undeclared freshman, other than the worries they faced about being undeclared. Here are some of the advantages they found:

- The support and resources available to only undeclared students: the workshops, the undeclared mentor program, and the undeclared student council included!
- You don’t have to redeclare every time your interests change
- You have the freedom to go in any direction you want

As our Undeclared Adviser, Paul Justice, said, being undeclared is the best choice in major for incoming freshmen.

Being Undeclared

by Jessica Arrington, Francisco Melendez, Sydney Johnstone, and Tyler Springman

Hey, are you an undeclared student looking to get involved on campus and gain experience in a field of interest? Your solution may be in Gen S-280: Intro to Civic Engagement, a semester class here on campus. Gen S-280's main objective is to get undeclared students engaged on and off campus with various organizations while exploring different majors and professions in the process. Along with focusing on civic engagement, students in the class are connected with fellow undergraduates who went through the same experiences as undeclared first-year students, along with faculty and staff members who provide more insight into a specific program or major. Just by joining this class, you are given the chance to take part in great opportunities around campus, and a wide range of resources are at your service.

This week in Gen S-280, a panel of students were brought in to provide more insight into their past experience being an undeclared undergraduate. Beth Bushey, Linda Dawood, Kylie Carpenter, Naomi Marroquin, Paige Valiukas, and Ariana De Santi came by to give the class advice on circumventing dilemmas an undeclared freshman might experience, as well as giving reassurance to the students about coming into SDSU as undeclared. Some advice the panelists stressed for all freshman students is to get involved on campus, do not be afraid to enroll in classes that interest you, and to take advantage of all the resources on campus provided for you. Panelist Naomi Marroquin explained, "It's not just about the grades you get, but also the people you meet and the connections you make." Taking part in the Gen S-280 class will provide you the connections and experiences you may be searching for. And even if you are feeling lost concerning your major, as panelist Linda Dawood stated, "being part of not knowing is an advantage." As an undeclared student, you are able to explore and experience classes that other students in set majors are not able to, and Gen S-280 is an example of that. If you are looking to get engaged on and off campus, get connected with the many colleges and organizations here at SDSU, take full advantage of being an undeclared student by enrolling in Gen S-280: Intro to Civic Engagement.



Advice for Undeclared Students

Written by: Chris Cordova, Lauren Klug, Hayden Smith, Joey Vink

How to Decide on a Major:

- Check out different leadership organizations around campus that peak your interest.
- Talk to your peers/mentors about your interests and concerns.
- Take a wide range of classes that are potentially aligned with your interested majors.
- Process of elimination: Look through list of majors and decide which one's you definitely will not declare
- GO TO WORKSHOPS AND UNDECLARED ADVISING!
- If interested in a major, go talk to the major advisers in that potential field

Advantages of Being Undeclared

- You have access to far more workshops and resources that others do.
- You have the opportunity to pick a path when you are ready, instead of going through the process to change your major multiple times.
- You have access to all advisors to help you figure out what you want to do.

Disadvantages of Being Undeclared

- Not knowing which classes to take...undeclared students should attempt to take classes that interest them. Finding interests can help students ultimately decide on a major.
- Feeling behind...undeclared students at times feel behind because they initially are not taking classes required for a specific major. DON'T worry you're not behind, everyone their first 2 years takes GE's, and it is very common for undeclared students classes to end up filling some requirements for their major once they declare.

Specific clubs/classes that have helped past undeclared students find a major

- Oceanography
- Sociology
- European Studies
- Psychology
- Geology

- Business fraternity

Undeclared Report

Johni Fletcher, Jimmy Meehan, Mason Koransky, and Tyler Ramsey

The undeclared major is for students who are not ready to choose a major yet. Being an undeclared student means you can take your general classes while exploring through the options of what you want to major in. Going into college undeclared can be scary or even seem like a bad idea, but it isn't. There's a multitude of reasons as to why being undeclared is a good choice and also a lot of added benefits.

One reason being undeclared is better than going in with a specific major is that you have the freedom to choose any major you want. When you apply under a specific major, you are tied into that major. When applying to colleges that major may be extremely impacted decreasing your chances of getting into the school. When you apply undeclared, you have the option of every major offered at the school and it is easier to switch into a major. You also get more time to decide what major you want to choose, without having to decide right out of high school.

The second reason being undeclared until you choose your major is beneficial are the perks specifically for undeclared students. Undeclared students have the opportunity to meet with the undeclared advisor, Paul Justice, who helps guide students towards their general education and choosing a major. Undeclared students have the opportunity to take General Studies 280, a class full of undeclared students, to assist in their journey towards picking a major through fieldwork and research of the different majors. Undeclared students are also provided with workshops they can attend that can

aid them towards declaring a major. There's also an undeclared student council to help students get involved and speak to students in a position like them.

If you are still considering going into SDSU undeclared then that means you are still unsure what you want to do with your life and that is perfectly fine. The resources offered to undeclared students are unlike any other major that you could go into. They are here to help you in all aspects of your school life. So take a chance, be an undeclared student and we all promise that you will not regret it!

How to do Undeclared Right

By: Jasmine Llamas, Emma Johnson,
AK Sta Ines, and Hailey Lincoln

Beth Bushley, Linda Dawood, Kylie Carpenter, Naomi Marroquin, Paige Valiukas, and Ariana De Santi all began their freshman year of college at San Diego State University as undeclared majors--and the General Studies 280 class had the opportunity to interview them.

Linda Dawood, a fourth-year student and marketing major, claimed that “being undeclared was an advantage and a disadvantage.” Many undeclared students can relate to the fact that sometimes they feel lost because all of their peers seem to have their life figured out already. What you have to know is that one of the advantages of being undeclared is that you get to take a range of diverse classes, and have the ability to learn new things from them. In addition, faculty members on campus offer a ton of resources because they know that undeclared students may be lost, so it is important to take advantage of that! Undeclared students aren’t limited to which advisor they’re allowed to contact or what workshops they’re allowed to attend. One student sparked the question, “What would you change if you had to go back to your freshman year?” Each panelist answered with the idea of getting more involved early on. The second-year criminal justice major, Naomi Marroquin, made the point that, “it is about who you know and what will open doors.” It’s essential that all undeclared freshman attend all the undeclared workshops, talk to advisors, and join organizations that they have the slightest bit of interest in--do not be intimidated to go alone! It will be worth it. Paige Valiukas assures everyone that waiting to declare a major is more beneficial, because being undeclared doesn’t make school harder and you won’t have to go through the work of re-declaring a major like most students coming in with a major will do. So, don’t stress! Remember, you don’t need to rush into declaring your major! A benefit of being undeclared is that once you’ve been declared into your major, you will have all your GE’s finished and typically take all your major classes at once. As a result, all your classes intertwine and you will only be taking classes on a subject that you’re passionate about. Now, the most important message for those who are undeclared is to remember that, “campus is an open field for you... you can go any path.” -Linda Dawood

HEY UNDECLARED FRESHMAN !!!

:Meredith Bowdle, Garrett Augustis, Tabitha Lang, Franklin Golojuch:

Did you know being undeclared is totally okay, and may even benefit you in the long run? The transition into college from high school can be quite overwhelming. Trust us, we know. But don't worry, there are so many people just like you and even more who have been in your shoes and want to help you!

Now before you freak out, start feeling lost, overwhelmed, and or all three of those things, take a look at some very useful information that will help you get a bit of confidence starting school as an undeclared freshman.

One of the amazing things about being undeclared is the amount of people who want to help you figure out the right path for your college career. One way this happens is hearing from a panel of second to senior year students who have been undeclared and declared a major and even some who are still like you and trying to figure it out. IN GEN_S280 you get the chance to ask students all the things about being undeclared that I'm sure you are wondering right now. Below are some of the frequently asked questions and answers from that panel of students.

?? What are the biggest challenges of being undeclared ??

-Picking classes not knowing which ones to take.

-Feeling behind because the freshman with majors are told which classes to take.

*Don't worry!! Being undeclared will not put you behind compared to anyone else, if anything, it allows you to explore more classes while getting GE's out of the way.

*Take note that people get behind by not choosing classes wisely. If you are interested in something take a GE class for it so you, "kill two birds with one stone" and get a major requirement out of the way as well as satisfying a GE requirement.

?? What are the advantages of being undeclared ??

-There are so many resources available to you. Ex: workshops and advising.

-So many students change their major. So by being undeclared at first, you save yourself so much time and extra work that students changing a major have to go through.

-Being undeclared allows you to go to any major department for advising. Being declared at first limits you to just your major advisor.

?? How did you declare your major ??

-Go to club meetings!! GET INVOLVED EARLY! Meeting professors in a major of interest.

-Take advantage of advising and everyone who is available to help you and answer questions.

?? How often should you go to advising ??

-Go to the workshops. They are there and designed to be beneficial to you, so let them help!

-Go to advising when you have questions or are seeking help/advice. Whether that is every month or just twice a year. Go how often you need to.

-It's a good idea to go when it comes time to make your schedule.

?? What would you have changed ??

-Not getting involved soon enough. Should have joined more clubs/ organizations on campus sooner.

-Getting out of your comfort zone. If you are interested in something don't be afraid to go alone to that things. You will meet so many people and make important connections that can help you.

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