

# University Advising Program

University Advising and Academic Services Center



# Western Illinois University



## If you are unsure of a major, then the University Advising Program is the right place for you.....

### How do I know which major to choose?

Majors that have a close match to your interests, personality, skills and values may be more personally rewarding. The more information you have about yourself, majors and careers, the easier it is to choose a major. Advisors in UAASC can help you in the process of deciding on a major by guiding you through four steps: self-assessment, major and career research, decision making and goal setting.

(For detailed description of these steps go to [www.wiu.edu/advising/current/exploration.php](http://www.wiu.edu/advising/current/exploration.php))

Advisors in the University Advising Program for undeclared students are full time academic support professionals committed to student success. They view themselves as mentors and resource people who recognize that some students will experience difficulties adjusting to university life. In addition to assisting with course selection, advisors help students explore major and career options and facilitate their transition to college life.

Students who choose this program rather than a major upon entering the university will not be at a disadvantage since all students take classes in the General Education Curriculum which provides exposure to a variety of areas of study. Rather these students get the advantage of exploring areas of interest while making progress toward their degree.

Nationally, undeclared and

exploratory students represent a significant proportion of the entering student body at most colleges and universities. The University Advising Program is in fact the largest major for entering freshmen at Western. Many other students (between 60% -75%) who declare a major when beginning university studies, change their major at least once before they graduate (National Academic Advising Association, Commission on Undecided/ Exploratory Students).

It is common for undeclared students to worry about not having a major. They might feel that they should hurry and make a choice quickly but it is completely normal to explore different academic options at Western thus allowing the students to make the best informed decision for them.

*Plan for your education!*



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FROM PARENTS

### What do Academic Advisors do?

Academic Advisors know about University policies and procedures, so they can assist students with navigating and interpreting General Education requirements and additional university publications. They work with students in researching and exploring majors, selecting courses, and registering for classes. Advisors also refer students to resources available both on and off campus.

Advisors focus on the basics, such as what is a credit, how do you create a class schedule, how should you manage your time, etc. In addition to the basics, advisors will also work with students in a developmental way. Developmental advisors recognize the importance of interactions between the student and the campus environment, focus on the whole person, and work with the student at that person's own life stage of development.

### What do Academic Advisors expect from students?

Advisors expect students to review and identify courses of interest from the General Education Handbook and undergraduate catalog. Students need to research and investigate majors that interest them and ask questions.

## STUDENT SUCCESS ..... CONNECT TO TUTORING AND LEARNING RESOURCES

- Math Department Help Center
- SWELL—Student Workshops for Excellence in Learning and Life - online workshops that cover time management, being an engaged student, study skills and test taking
- University Counseling Center Study Skills Seminars
- Tutoring Groups
- Drop-in Tutoring at the Malpass Library
- Department Academic Assistance Centers
- University 100 Focus on Success Freshmen Seminar

**For more details:** [www.wiu.edu/advising/tutoring](http://www.wiu.edu/advising/tutoring)

## UAASC

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UAASC Advisors are  
members of NACADA

National Academic  
Advising Association

This association promotes  
and supports quality  
academic advising in  
institutions of higher  
education to enhance the  
educational development  
of students

[http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/  
index.htm](http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/index.htm)

## Top Qualities & Employable Skills.....

### Communication skills

*Verbal:* Able to communicate with others, including those from different cultures;

*Written:* possessing knowledge and use of grammar, spelling, and sentence structure;

*Presentation:* skilled at creating and presenting information and ideas to individuals and groups.

### Leadership skills

Ability to guide, direct, or influence people.

### Teamwork skills

Self-reliant while also being able to work with others—creating an effective team dynamic.

### Geographic awareness

Awareness of the world, where countries and cities are located, social and cultural geographic movement, and physical assets of a region

### Global understanding

Ability to interact with people from all over the world and

understand global issues.

### Technical

Technical aptitude—what is required in a position, computer literacy with major software and basic troubleshooting skills.

### Analytical thinking

Able to take time to examine something in great detail in order to understand it better or discover more about it.

### Strong work ethic

Taking pride in projects and working hard in order to accomplish a task.

### Time management skills

Managing projects, meetings, deadlines, and other responsibilities in a systematic and efficient way.

### Flexibility/adaptability

Able to adjust easily to a new environment or different conditions according to the needs of an organization

Marquette University Career Services  
[http://www.marquette.edu/csc/  
index.shtml](http://www.marquette.edu/csc/index.shtml)

Your college major does not train you for a single, specific job. Instead, it seeks to develop your aptitude and abilities so that you can use them in the broadest variety of careers. That is why it is important to choose a major that allows your individual talents to flourish. Find a major that fits YOU, rather than trying to fit yourself into a major. Undergraduate education is not so much a determinant of what you want to BE, as much as what you are prepared to BECOME.

Fort Hays State University  
<http://www.fhsu.edu/aace/>



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