Purpose:

The purpose of this guide is to help you identify ways to gather additional information about potential majors from individuals across campus.

Description:

After you have done some research online regarding a potential major, another great way to gather additional insights about a major is to attend an information session or talk with students, advisors, and faculty connected to the major. This “insider” insight can help you determine if the major is a potential fit.

Directions:

1) **Find an Information Session** for a major or college you are interested in. Visit the [Alphabetical List of Majors](http://cape.umn.edu/majors/umn/majors/alpha.html) page on the Cape Website. Click on the major(s) you are interested in and follow the link under “Major Homepage”. View the department’s home page to determine if the program offers an information session and attend one. These sessions often cover basic information about the major and admission requirements (if appropriate). They’re a quick, easy way to gather more information.
   
   *HINT: some colleges also offer transfer information sessions that provide a nice overview of the majors as well as the admissions process and requirements. [Click here](http://cape.umn.edu/majors/transferring/) to get to a list of all U of M college transfer information. Under each college, look for a link that says “information sessions”.

2) **Find a student** who is in a major you are interested in. The Major Network is a University of Minnesota cross-college network that connects upper-level students who are passionate about their majors, with students who are exploring different major options. Exploring students are paired with an upper-level mentor to get a firsthand look at what it is like to be a student in a particular major. To get started, [click here](http://cape.umn.edu/services/network/) for more information and to fill out a brief application. Once your application is processed, CAPE will work to find a student to match you with.

3) **Find an advisor or faculty member** in the department you are considering. Ask to sit down with the person for 15-20 minutes so you can gather information about the major. Below are tips for how to find and connect with advisers and faculty:

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1 http://cape.umn.edu/majors/umn/majors/alpha.html
2 http://cape.umn.edu/majors/transferring/
3 http://cape.umn.edu/services/network/
College Transfer Advisers: Many colleges have a designated Transfer Adviser that you can meet with to learn more about programs that are outside of your current college. You can find the names of these advisers on the [CAPE website here](http://cape.umn.edu/majors/transferring/).

Departmental Advisers: To find advisers for a specific major, start by going to the major department’s website and look for links such as “Undergraduate program”, “Advising”, or “Declaring your major.” See if they have any drop-in hours listed, or send them an email to request an appointment time.

Faculty: To find faculty in the majors you are interested, start by going to the major department’s website and look for links such as “People”, “Faculty”, or “About.” Some faculty also include information about their research or teaching specializations, which can help you determine who might be a good fit for you to talk to based on your interests. Another way you can search for faculty would be to look in the class schedule for classes in the major you are exploring, and see which professors are teaching in the current or upcoming semester.

When you meet with an adviser or faculty member, come prepared with a list of questions to ask. Here are some examples to get you started:

- What kind of students tend to enroll in this major and find it a good fit?
- Are there any recommended intro courses that could help me explore this major?
- Can students take electives or study abroad in this major?
- Is this a competitive major? If so, how should I prepare for admission? Are there any prerequisite courses?
- What types of engagement experiences/activities would you recommend for students in this major?
- (for faculty) How did you become interested in this discipline? Can you tell me more about your research area?

Reflection Prompts:

- After talking with someone from the major, are you more or less interested in this major? What made you decide that?
- What new information did you learn about the major that you didn't know before talking to someone? How has this information influenced your thoughts about the major?
- How realistic is it for you to pursue this major (do you need to transfer colleges, apply for admission, take pre-requisite courses, etc)?
- What seems to excite you about this major? What are potential drawbacks?
- If the major is still interesting, what are some next steps you can take towards making a decision?

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4 http://cape.umn.edu/majors/transferring/