



**solve for (X) in terms of (why)!**

## Our Mission

University Advising partners with students, parents, and the community to facilitate autonomy, foster independence, and develop opportunities to **engage** in and **refine** the academic **advising** experience.

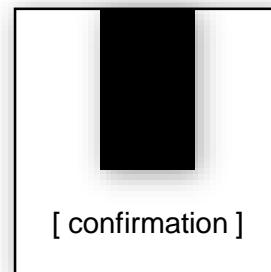
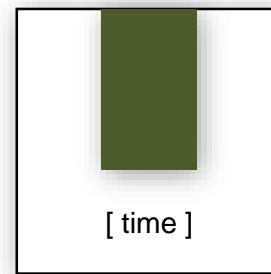
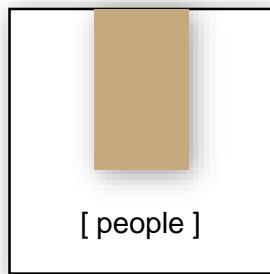
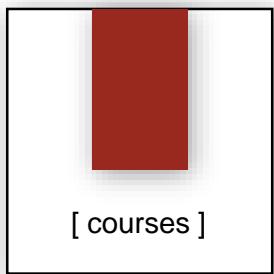
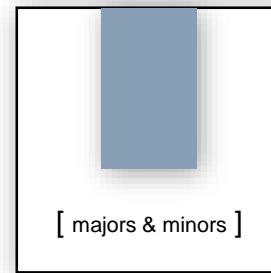
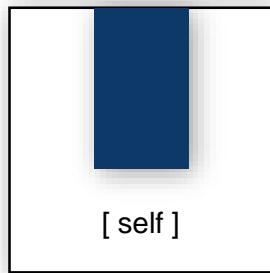
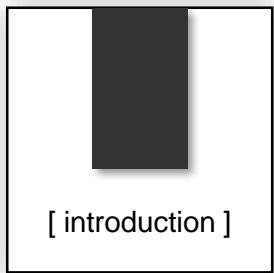
### **Engage. Refine. Advise.**

Three simple words that envelop our entire philosophy of facilitating student growth, development, and success.

**Engage.** We meet students where they are, academically, socially, geographically. From raider road shows and red raider orientation to teaching raider ready classes to intentional communication with students who may be searching for direction, we actively engage students in conversations, action plans, and success strategies.

**Refine.** Goals are vital to success. ttua provides the support and framework for you to look critically at your goals, your strengths, your talents, your intentions and find details and refinements to make those goals a reality.

**Advise.** This doesn't mean picking courses for you. Advising means coaching, facilitating, encouraging, guiding, questioning, pushing, collaborating. You are in control of your college career; we are here to support, assist, bolster, and champion your success.





[ introduction ]

(why)

## What is eXplore?

**eXplore** is a program that consists of a collection of activities designed to assist exploring/deciding students in the process of choosing their best-fit college major.

The objective of the program is to work with exploring students within two consecutive semesters as they make their major decision.

Many similar programs are based conceptually on providing their students with a series of steps or with a list of resources that can aid them find their way to their future major.

eXplore differs in that it teaches exploring students how to use their resources analytically, critically and strategically in order to graduate in a timely manner.

We believe that exploring students come to the university from many different walks of life. They seek higher education for a variety of purposes and intentions. Some are exploring because they are interested in more than one area of study.

## What is eXplore?

Others are returning or non-traditional students who are exploring options that would allow them to graduate with a degree that would help them in their professional life.

Exploration is also common among students who already belong to a major on campus. These decided students might eXplore because they are looking for either a minor or a second major. It is also common that decided students might eXplore because they are having doubts about their current major.

Therefore, a program that is designed to assist such a diverse population should be more sophisticated than a to-do list. It should be more engaging than a list of referrals to websites or offices on campus. And above all, it should be educational.

- 1) A deciding or exploring student can be designated initially as exploratory.

The exploratory designation is most appropriate for students who are exploring majors in a variety of academic disciplines and colleges.

Through eXplore, students can explore best-fit majors by aligning values, interests, skills, and abilities.

Exploratory status allows students the freedom to explore best-fit academic majors while staying on track in progress toward a degree.

For more information on eXplore and the exploratory designations, contact:

**Texas Tech University Advising,  
347 Drane Hall,  
T: 806.742.2189,  
F: 806.742.2200,  
[explore.advising@ttu.edu](mailto:explore.advising@ttu.edu),  
[www.advising.ttu.edu](http://www.advising.ttu.edu).**

## Who Is The Exploring Student?

<https://catalog.ttu.edu/> 

# Who Is The Exploring Student?

2) **Exploratory status** may also benefit students who aspire to apply to a Dental, Medical, Nursing, Optometry, Pharmacy School or to one of a full range of Health Career Professional Schools (e.g., physical therapy, physician assistant).

These students should consult the **Pre-Professional Health Programs** in the TTU **catalog** and seek appropriate advisement as recommended.

3) Students who are only exploring majors that fall within one particular academic college should check with advisors in that specific college.

4) Students who aspire to pursue **Pre-Veterinary Medicine** should refer to **Pre-Veterinary Medicine** in TTU catalog and seek advisement from the College of Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources.

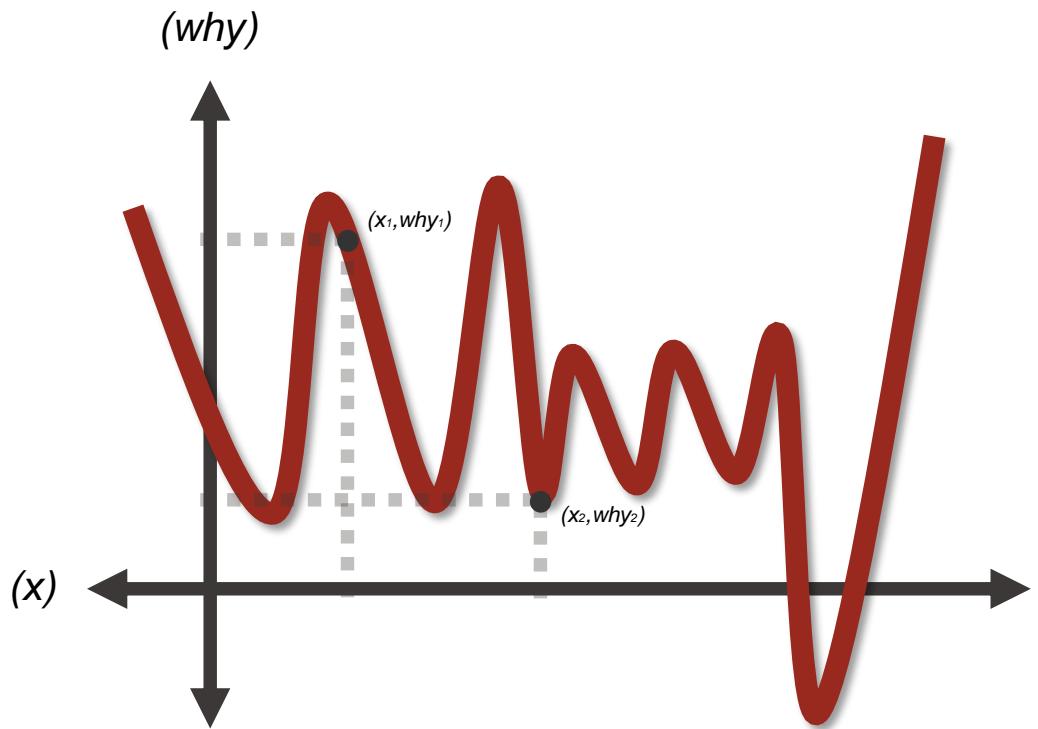
# Solving For (X) In Terms Of (why)!

eXplore is based on the mathematical concept of trying to determine the relationship between two variables (**X** and **Y**). We believe that, just like in math, *if* (X) and (Y) are related, and *if* (X)= an explored major and (Y)= why this major is a good fit, **then** one can monitor the changes in the value of (X) every time (Y) or (why) changes, and vice versa.

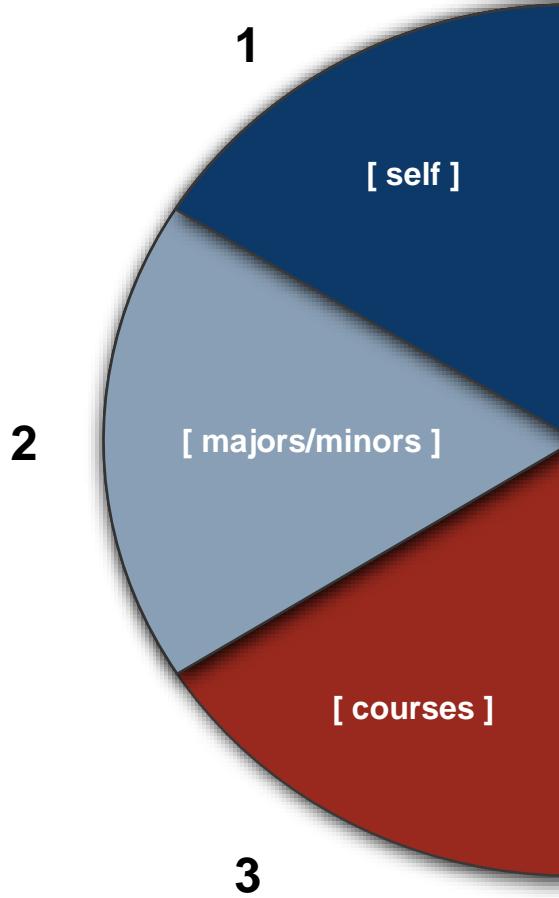
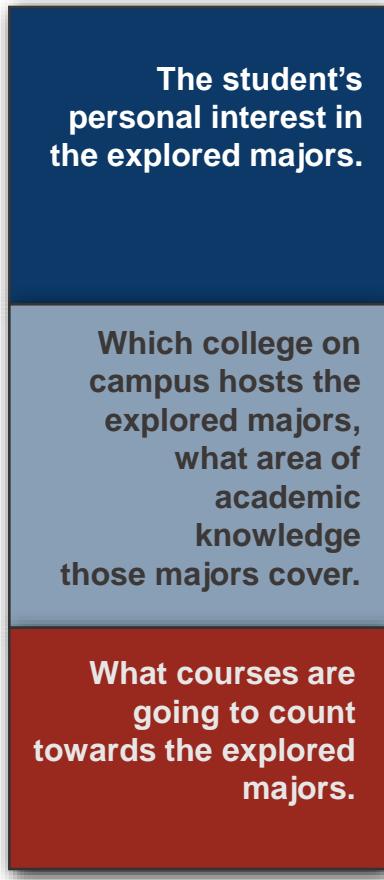
Such an approach should reflect complexity, as it considers levels of relationships between (X) and (why), rather than trying to find a linear and prescribed path from (why) to (X).

In other words, this approach will allow the exploring student to weigh all the reasons for choosing a major equally, rather than follow one path of reasoning that may or may not fit all situations.

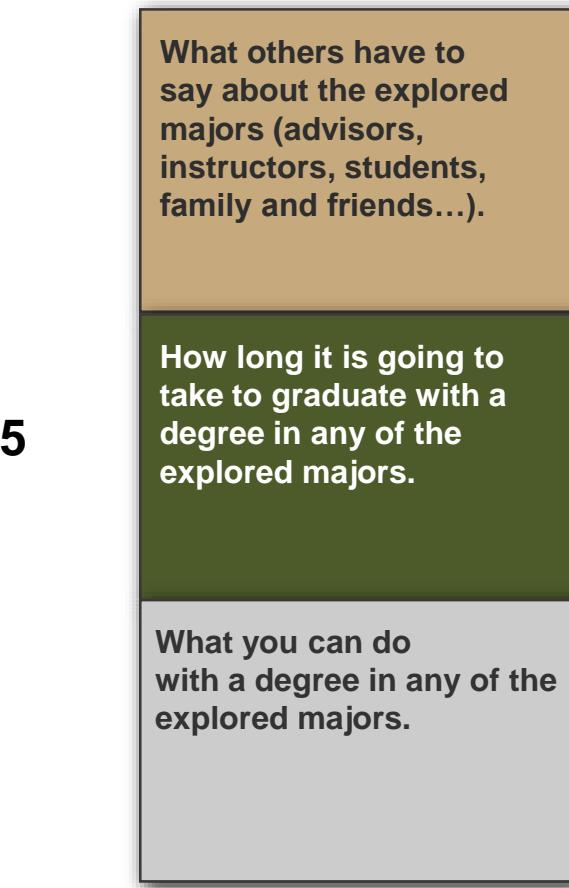
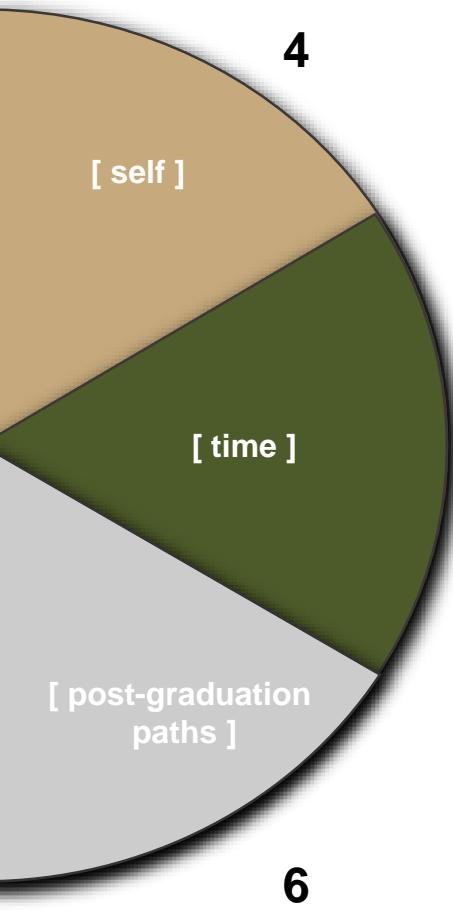
Furthermore, this approach to choosing a major should give the exploring student a chance to look at several major options at the same time, rather than trying to commit to a single major while still in the process of deciding.



*[solving for  $(x)$  in terms of  $(why)$ ]]*



**6 determining factors in the process of choosing a major**



**the following is a group of exploratory activities that examine these 6 determining factors**

**Exploring Students are less prepared for college, are more prone to be “at risk students” and are going to take longer to graduate than their decided peers.**

In fact, there is no research that links exploring students to poor academic performance.

At Texas Tech University, advisors at University Advising (UA) strive to help students build a well-rounded and educational academic plan during their exploratory semesters, which will provide a sense of purpose, achievement, and connectedness with the institution.

Our advisors collaborate with exploring students to find the best-fit degree in an efficient and timely manner. Both research and experience in the academic advising field have shown that students who receive professional support and assistance in selecting a major are just as likely as their peers to graduate in a timely manner.\*

\* Pargett, Kelly K., "The Effects of Academic Advising on College Student Development in Higher Education" (2011). *Educational Administration: Theses, Dissertations, and Student Research*. 81. <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cehsedaddiss/81>

## Common Misconceptions Concerning Majors and the Exploring Student

<https://sc.edu/nrc/presentation/annual/2012/files/CI-178.pdf>

<https://www.astate.edu/college/university-college/advising-center/information-for-students/undecided-student-myths/>

[https://advising.gmu.edu/current\\_students/\\_Myths\\_About\\_Majors.pdf](https://advising.gmu.edu/current_students/_Myths_About_Majors.pdf)

<https://www2.humboldt.edu/acac/students/myths-facts>

<https://career.sa.ucsb.edu/students/career-planning/choosing-major/myths-about-majors>

# Common Misconceptions Concerning Majors and the Exploring Student

**Students should get all their Core Curriculum (General/Basic) requirements out of the way first, and then they can decide on a major or a degree.**

This is simply unadvisable because certain majors require specific core classes. For example, a student takes a music class for his or her core Creative Arts requirement in their first exploratory semester. Two semesters later, that student ends up choosing a major that requires an Art History course to fulfill that same area. This means that the student now is going to have to add an extra course to their degree plan. This can be avoided with professional and trained advising. At Texas Tech, UA advisors assist students in navigating the core curriculum strategically in order to make sure, as much as possible, that all the courses selected are either required for a future major or can count as an elective course in their future degree plan.

## **Arts & Humanities or Liberal Arts majors are unemployable, (the “starving artist” misconception)**

It is true that some art students struggle to find work after school, but so do students in every other discipline, from philosophy to communications to business. The “starving artist” misconception, which believes that liberal arts graduates are unemployable ignores the reality of today’s economy, where jobs require a mixture of skills not easily packaged in a single college major. The skills and competencies that Liberal Arts majors emphasize, such as writing, synthesis, creative thinking and problem solving, are sought after by current employers.

In addition, a recent study (Burning Glass Technologies) that analyzed job-market trends concluded that if liberal arts graduates gain proficiency in some technical skills, such as social media or data analysis, their prospects of landing entry-level jobs increase substantially. Students who major in theater, anthropology, history, psychology, and similar majors do find jobs in business, research, human resources, teaching, the military, and a variety of other occupations.

# **Common Misconceptions Concerning Majors and the Exploring Student**

# Common Misconceptions Concerning Majors and the Exploring Student

**Choosing one major means giving up all the others.**

Texas Tech University offers its students opportunities to combine interests in more than one major or area of study. It's possible, for example, for students to complete a double major (two majors from the same college) or end up graduating with a dual degree (two majors from two different colleges).

Another way to combine interests in several different areas is through degree-programs such as University Studies.

<https://www.depts.ttu.edu/universitystudies/>

(A comprehensive list of TTU minors can be found in the Major/Minor chapter)

## **Students can wait until their junior year to figure out their major**

At TTUA we believe that academic and career planning cannot be a passive activity.

It takes time and effort to think through the process of choosing a major. The student must take action with full autonomy, and we are always available for assistance and guidance. Taking advantage of our resources and services can make the search for a major a more educational, rational, manageable, and even enjoyable process. After all, the quicker a student has found an academic home, the quicker they feel connected to their campus.

## **Once you decide your major, you're stuck with it.**

It's never too late to pursue your passion. Even if you decide in your junior or senior year that you want to do something different than your chosen major, your academic advisor should be able to work with you to craft a reasonable and acceptable plan to get there.

In addition, very often, a current major can become a minor or concentration, making the most of completed credits.

# **Common Misconceptions Concerning Majors and the Exploring Student**

# Common Misconceptions Concerning Majors and the Exploring Student

## Picking a major and a career are the same thing.

Choosing a major and choosing a career are two different activities. Although they are related, choosing a major doesn't limit you to just one career; and choosing a career doesn't limit you to just one major. Consider these examples:

- Students who decide they want to be a lawyer may choose any major and still be accepted into law school.
- Similarly, students who decide they want to be medical doctors can major in many different areas and still qualify for medical school, as long as they take the right courses, do well on the medical college admission test, etc.
- Students graduating from any one major could be employed in many different jobs; likewise, people who are employed in any one job could have graduated from many different majors. An English graduate can work as a news editor, a writer for an advertising company or an ESL teacher, for example.

# Common Misconceptions Concerning Majors and the Exploring Student

Furthermore, a position as an Assistant Curator in a museum can be filled by a history, an art history or an archaeology major.

- Many current jobs will be very different five years from now. New jobs are emerging every year, and with them, new skills, new knowledge, and new experiences.
- Career planning at the undergraduate level in most universities today focuses on the development of general, transferable skills (e.g., writing, speaking, critical thinking, computer literacy, problem solving, team building) that employers look for, and that graduates will need in order to adjust to rapidly changing careers.

## How Does eXplore Work?

In order to achieve the goal of connecting the exploring students to their future major within two semesters, UA advisors will always try to do the following:

- 1) Work with the exploring student simultaneously on at least two possible majors, preferably majors with different sets of transfer requirements.**

At TTUA, we believe that successful exploration requires understanding of all transfer prerequisites, including coursework and GPA. We encourage students who are exploring competitive majors (health careers, engineering or business) to also explore related majors with less competitive requirements. This way, students can move forward with a plan towards graduation regardless of the outcome of the competitive application processes.

**2) Aid the exploring student in finding courses that apply to all their explored majors.**

The success of this strategy depends on the number of courses the exploring student has completed, and the majors that the exploring student finds interesting.

However, what makes such a plan possible is:

- a) certain courses are required for all majors on campus
- b) several majors require similar courses, and
- c) many courses are required for a certain major but will count as an elective for another.

The goal is to give the student two semesters' worth of coursework that won't be lost no matter what option they decide.

## How Does eXplore Work?

# How Does eXplore Work?

## 3) Helping the exploring student in the process of weighing their options at the end of each exploratory activity they complete.

The program is designed so that by the end of each one of the six activities, students will be able to look at the pros and cons for each of the explored majors.

For instance, for a student who is exploring marketing and advertising, the determining factor in favoring one over the other might be:

- the fact that marketing relies heavily on mathematics, while advertising focuses on styles of communication and persuasion.
- that marketing requires a 2.75 GPA but for advertising it is 2.0.
- or that the student's completed credit hours apply to one of those majors more than the other.

The activities are chosen and prioritized based on the needs of each exploring student.

After completing the activities that address the students' concerns, they should have a clear vision on why a certain major is the most suitable major for them.



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY  
University Programs & Student Success  
**University Advising™**

**Drane Hall Room 347**

Mail Stop: 1038, PO Box: 41038

**PHONE:**  
806.742.2189

**EMAIL**  
[explore.advising@ttu.edu](mailto:explore.advising@ttu.edu)