Road Less Traveled: Non-Traditional Majors to a Dream Career
Session Overview

1. UC Admission Selectivity Context
2. UC Pathways & Alternate Majors
3. Employer Expectations
4. Debunking Myths
5. Academic Enrichment Opportunities
6. Tips & Tools to Use
What was your academic path?
UC ADMISSION SELECTIVITY
Transfer applicants must apply to a **specific major**.

**GPA and major preparation courses** are significant factors for competitive UC majors.

Some majors are far more highly selective than others.
I’d turn back if I were you!

Go this way instead.
A Few Highly Selective Majors

Average UC Admit Rates – Fall 2015

- Business
- Biology
- Computer Science
- Psychology
- Engineering
PATHWAYS & ALTERNATE MAJORS
The UC Transfer Pathways

Outlines courses needed for 21 popular majors at ALL UC campuses.

Most popular = most competitive
(most popular ≠ better)

Good starting point & exposure
UC offers 150 different academic disciplines with over 2,000 majors
Ethnomusicology [UCLA]

Urban Studies [Berkeley]

Global Arts Studies [Merced]

Speculative Design [San Diego]

Hydrologic Sciences & Policy [Santa Barbara]

Art & Design: Games & Playable Media [Santa Cruz]
## Alternate Major Options

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major/ Field</th>
<th>Alternate Major</th>
<th>Campus</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>Cognitive Science</td>
<td>UC Davis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Financial/ Actuarial Math</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engineering/ technology</td>
<td>Network &amp; Digital Technology</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Social Policy &amp; Public Service</td>
<td>UC Irvine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journalism</td>
<td>Creative Writing</td>
<td>UC Riverside</td>
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Notable Alumni

**Linda Sanchez**  
UC Berkeley  
U.S. House of Representatives member

**Jim Berney**  
UC Irvine  
Award winning visual effects director

Spanish  
Computer Science
Notable Alumni

Dan Santat  
*UC San Diego*  
Caldecott winning artist for children’s literature

Axel Alonso  
*UC Santa Cruz*  
Editor-in-chief at Marvel Comics

Microbiology

Sociology
EMPLOYER EXPECTATIONS
62.1% have jobs that require any college degree.

27.3% are employed in fields related to their major.
The only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven’t found it yet, keep looking. Don’t settle.

- Steve Jobs
Employers’ Top Priorities for Student Learning Outcomes

Skill/Competency

- Scientific/Technological Skills: 70%
- Innovation/Creativity: 70%
- Teamwork/Collaboration: 71%
- Ethical Decision Making: 75%
- Analyze/Solve Complex Problems: 75%
- Knowledge/Skills Applied to Real World Settings: 79%
- Critical Thinking/Analytical Reasoning: 81%
- Effective Oral/Written Communication: 89%
Graduates need skills like how to run a meeting, how to write succinctly, to ask great questions and be deeply curious, engage in teamwork and have an ownership mindset instead of a victim mindset.

— Kristen Hamilton, CEO of Koru
Alternate Majors with Top Employer-Valued Transferable Skills

**Communication**
- Linguistics (UCLA)
- Literary Journalism (UCI)
- Sociology: Culture and Communication (UCSD)

**Critical Thinking, Analytical Reasoning**
- Philosophy (all)
- Hydrologic Sciences and Policy (UCSB)
- Mathematical Analytics and Operations Research (UCD)
Employers’ Expectations Have Increased

91% “Employees take on more responsibility and use a broader set of skills”

90% “Employees must work harder to collaborate with other departments than in the past”

88% “The challenges employees face are more complex than in the past”

88% “To succeed in our company, employees need higher levels of learning and knowledge”
Majors & Minors Aligned with Employer Expectations

- Cognitive Science (UCM)
- Community Studies (UCSC)
- Human Rights, Interdisciplinary (Minor at UCB)
- Media and Cultural Studies (UCR)

Broader Skill Set / Collaboration
What Are They Looking For?

**Law, Business & Medical Schools**
- All 3 accept any major
- Med School: The 2nd most popular undergraduate major is English
- Scores on LSAT, GMAT, MCAT
- Top Skill for all 3: WRITING!

**Masters & PhD programs**
- Interest/knowledge about the program
- A strongly written personal statement
- Reference letters from faculty who can PERSONALLY attest to a student’s ability and preparedness for graduate school
- GRE scores
- Strong undergraduate GPA
UC Students: Then and Now

UC Davis Alum
Major: Chinese, Minor: Economics
Works for an insurance company

UCLA alumna
Majors: History and Human Complex Systems
Founded Swipe Out Hunger nonprofit and is on the Forbes 30 Under 30 list.

UC Berkeley Student
Major: African American Studies
Doing an internship with KPMG consulting
DEBUNKING MYTHS
About Popular Majors & UC Admission
Fact or Fiction?

Psychology, Sociology, and Communication are the most applicable, pragmatic liberal arts majors for students who don’t know what to major in.
Fiction!

These are often our most competitive majors.

Advise your students to explore our lesser known majors, such as:
- Liberal Arts
- Cognitive Science
- Linguistics
- Community Studies
- Critical Race and Ethnic Studies
Fact or Fiction?

A student must study political science or history to be competitive for law school.
Fiction!

Our very own Governor Jerry Brown majored in Classics at Berkeley and later went to Yale Law.
Students **DO NOT** need to major in Biology to go to medical school or study Business to go into the business field.
Fact!

Consider some of UC’s lesser known (and less highly selective) majors as an alternative.

- MATHEMATICAL ANALYTICS AND OPERATIONS RESEARCH [UC Davis]
- NUTRITIONAL SCIENCE [UC Berkeley]
- COGNITIVE SCIENCE [UC Merced]
- GLOBAL HEALTH [UCSD]
Fact or Fiction?

For a student to be eligible for admission to UC, an **AA/AS degree** is required and must match the major at UC.
Fiction!

An AA/AS adds value, but is not required for admission into a specific major.
Fact or Fiction?

A student’s major will determine their career path and does not allow flexibility.
Fiction!

A student’s career path is shaped by a multitude of opportunities.

Consider UCSD Alumni Nick Woodward who founded the GoPro. He graduated with a BA in Visual Arts and a minor in Creative Writing from UCSD.
ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES
UC Programs

Programs offered by the UC system and campuses

- Beyond the campuses
- Research opportunities

UCDC

Education Abroad Programs

UC LEADS
Support for the Future

Professional preparation at UC campuses

Career Centers    Student-led organizations
Equipping our Students

Connecting students to a dynamic world

Professional-based minors

Academically broad and diverse programs

Mentorship programs
TIPS

Early advising
• Transfer admission requirements
• Lower division courses

Ask questions
• What is most important?
• Major or campus location?
• Are you 100% sure on your major?
• Where do you want to work? Where are there opportunities for that career?
• What about your work environment is important to you?
TIPS

Student Exploration

What majors are offered at each UC? What are the opportunities to work with faculty.

Meet with UC Representative

Encourage students to meet with UC rep at College Fair or on campus.
TOOLS

Quick Reference Guide

- Campus Majors (61-76)
- By Discipline & Campus

http://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/counselors/downloadable-guides/
## TOOLS: Lesser Known Majors & Minors  
(by campus)

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Last, but not least…

• Major does not decide one’s career.

• Plenty of overlap between majors on campus.

• Look at alternate majors if not on track to attain the level necessary to meet selectivity.

• Students should understand what they want, why they want it, and talk to someone early about it

• Minor is a good way to further academic interests & be career ready.

• Employers want well rounded students. Supplement academic work with experiences that lead to "transferable skills."
QUESTIONS?

SUCCESS

WHAT PEOPLE THINK IT LOOKS LIKE

WHAT IT REALLY LOOKS LIKE

www.atbreak.com

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA