

3 REASONS WHY BEING UNDECIDED IS A SMART CHOICE

You (and your parents) should read this guide



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INTRODUCTION

When seniors are filling out college applications, there is always a lot of focus on intended majors. From accounting to chemistry, Spanish to social work, there are more options than ever to choose from. But if you're like a lot of students these days, you might prefer to keep your options open by enrolling as undecided. And you know what? That's a smart choice.

Because of the many benefits of entering college without declaring a major and the plentiful resources available to those students – all of which you'll read about in the pages ahead – undecided students are just as successful as those who choose a major from the start.

No matter where you are in the application process, you'll find this guide helpful. Here, you'll learn several reasons why starting out as undecided can be a fantastic thing. But first, what does it really mean?



WHAT IT MEANS TO BE UNDECIDED

In a nutshell, checking off undecided, or undeclared, means that you are telling a college you plan to start school without a chosen major.

This is not an indication of a lack of interest on your part. On the contrary, schools—the right schools for you—will assume that you're interested in a lot of areas.

Typically, you'll be asked to declare a major by the end of your sophomore year—giving you enough time to zero in on a concentration and complete the required courses.

**AND YES, YOU CAN STILL
GRADUATE IN FOUR YEARS!**



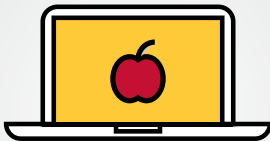
**Next, find out
three reasons
why it's a smart
choice to enter
as undecided.**



1 YOU GET TO EXPLORE MORE FIELDS OF STUDY.

Say you declared marketing from the start. You'd likely begin taking the required courses and electives immediately—and that'd be terrific, if you knew that's what you really wanted to do. But if you aren't yet sure, why not enter as undecided? Doing so can give you more time to learn about new things, dive deeper into areas you think you love and uncover passions you didn't know you had.

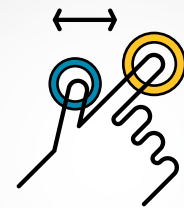
YOU COULD ...



TAKE A
NUTRITION CLASS



STUDY
SHAKESPEARE



LEARN AMERICAN
SIGN LANGUAGE



TRY OUT FINANCIAL
ACCOUNTING



CHECK OUT INTRO TO
FORENSIC SCIENCE



COMPLETE A
CORE COURSE

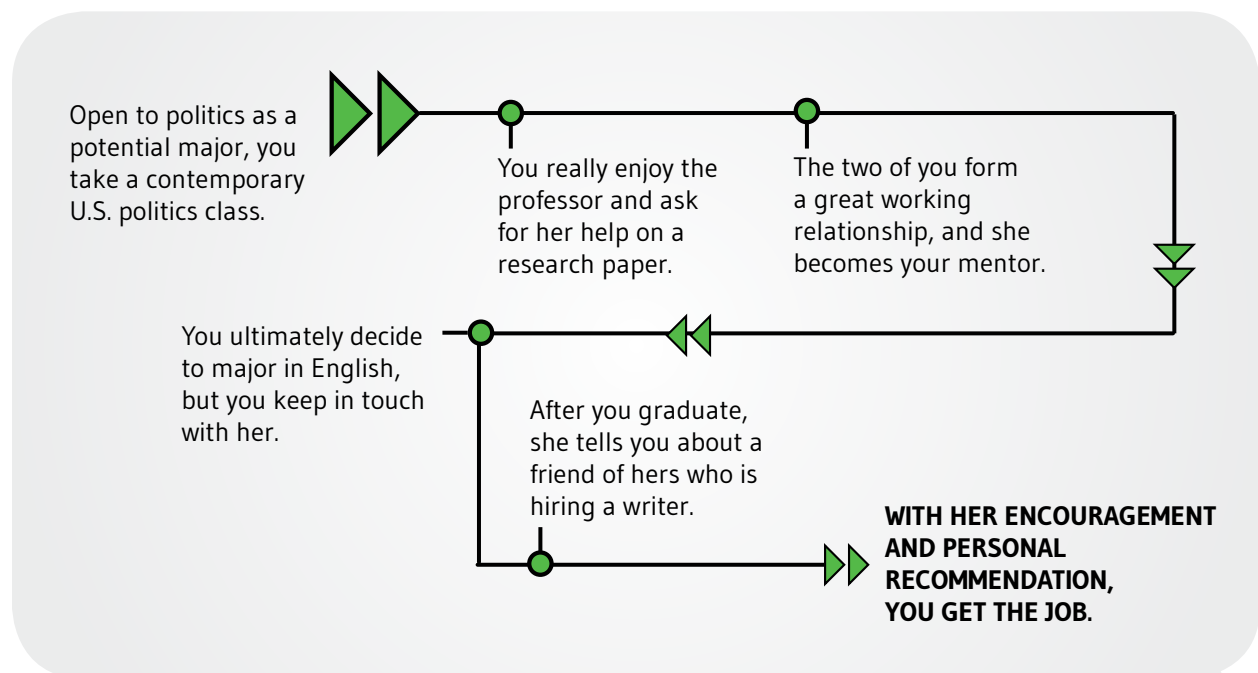
... all in one year. Doesn't that sound interesting, productive and fun?



YOU WILL DEVELOP RELATIONSHIPS YOU WOULDN'T HAVE OTHERWISE.

As long as you actively participate in your classes, take advantage of office hours and join study groups, you will get to know professors and other students that you wouldn't have met if you weren't undecided. Even if you eventually step out of that field, some of those relationships could have a lasting impact.

IMAGINE THIS ...



Many students form friendships and connections during those early exploratory classes that end up lasting a lifetime.



YOU'LL GAIN AN ARRAY OF SKILLS THAT EMPLOYERS WANT.

In each class you take during your time of exploration—even if you don't end up majoring in that topic—you'll build knowledge, personal values and professional skills that you'll be able to refer to in internship and job interviews. Employers look for a well-rounded, hardworking prospect who can prove their worth.

IN THOSE TWO EXPLORATORY YEARS ALONE, YOU COULD DEVELOP EXCELLENT SKILLS IN ...



VERBAL AND WRITTEN
COMMUNICATIONS



MULTITASKING



TEAMWORK



RESEARCH



PROBLEM-SOLVING



ANALYSIS



BRAINSTORMING



AND MUCH MORE



WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE UNDECIDED AT SIENA COLLEGE

Simply put, it's exhilarating. Siena wholeheartedly embraces the decision to not immediately declare a major, whereas other colleges discourage it. In fact, we call those students "exploring"—Exploring Science, Exploring Business or Exploring Liberal Arts, officially—because really, being undecided is being open to discovery. And we've got a lot for you explore.

YOU WILL:



FIT RIGHT IN

About half of our freshmen in the School of Business, School of Liberal Arts and School of Science enter as exploring.

HAVE PLENTY OF TIME TO EXPLORE

Siena College doesn't require you to declare a major until the end of your sophomore year. And even if you waited until then, you'd still have time to graduate in four years.



HAVE ASSISTANCE IN FINDING THE RIGHT MAJOR

We encourage our exploring students to speak with their advisors, faculty members and other peers. A career center counselor can also help you pave the way to a specific career based on your interests, values, skills and more.



HAVE LOTS OF OPTIONS TO CHOOSE FROM

In terms of academics, we offer 31 majors and 80+ minors, certificates and concentrations, resulting in countless unique program choices in liberal arts, science and business.



WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE UNDECIDED AT SIENA COLLEGE CONTINUED



YOU WILL JOIN THE RANKS OF SUCCESSFUL ALUMNI

Siena graduates who were initially exploring are now enjoying success in a wide variety of professions such as:

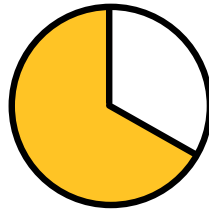
- writer/script coordinator at Sony Pictures Television
- special agent at the U.S. Department of Commerce
- management consultant at Gap International
- associate scientist at PepsiCo
- physician at Plainview Hospital

and the list goes on...

DID YOU KNOW?

97%

of recent graduates who started out exploring were hired at their first full-time job within one year of graduating



2/3 participate in an internship

40%

go on to receive a graduate, doctorate, medical, law or other professional degree

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT SIENA COLLEGE?



Located in Loudonville, New York, Siena is more than a liberal arts college. It's a learning community that prepares students for a successful life filled with compassion and drive, service and responsibility.

[VISIT OUR WEBSITE HERE](#)

FAQS FROM PARENTS

You're almost at the end of our guide! Hopefully you feel better about not having to choose a major right away. Now we suggest handing this over to your parents—who might have questions of their own. We rounded up what our Admissions team and tour guides get asked most from parents when it comes to students entering college as undecided.

Q. Can my student still graduate in four years, even if they don't choose a major until junior year?

A. Yes! On average, students who enter Siena undecided graduate at virtually the same rate as students who enter with a chosen major. We help keep them on track with their core courses those first two years, so they don't get behind.

Q. What are some ways my student can figure out what to major in?

A. They can talk with their advisor or a career counselor, take a variety of classes in conjunction with their core courses and meet with faculty. We also encourage our undecided students to attend events held by different majors that highlight why students study that major.

Q. My student is interested in study abroad and internship opportunities. Will being undecided make it difficult to participate?

A. Not at all. We encourage each student to gain experience outside the classroom. Those who enter as undecided are asked to declare a major by the end of their sophomore year, allowing ample time to complete program requirements and take advantage of experiential opportunities. Also, every Siena student has a dedicated academic advisor that can help with planning to make these personal goals possible.

"I have to admit, I was skeptical at first about my children receiving a liberal arts education. I wanted them to choose careers and take classes directly related to those careers. I wanted to be sure they would have the skills necessary to get great jobs upon graduation. It didn't take me long to realize that Siena's focus on liberal arts was preparing my children for more than jobs; it was preparing them for life."

Janet McHugh,
mother of Diana '06 (English)
and Kaitlyn '11 (Marketing)



WHO TO CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION

Thank you for reading our guide to entering college as undecided. If you still have questions, or would like to find out if Siena is the right fit for you, contact us—or come see us in person. We're here to help you navigate the application process from start to finish.

- ▶ [FIND YOUR ADMISSIONS COUNSELOR BY REGION](#)
- ▶ [CALL US AT 518-783-2423](#)
- ▶ [EMAIL US AT ADMISSIONS@SIENA.EDU](mailto:ADMISSIONS@SIENA.EDU)
- ▶ [CHECK OUT OUR ADMISSIONS BLOG](#)
- ▶ [SCHEDULE A CAMPUS VISIT](#)



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