

## PREPARATION GUIDE FOR ONE - HOUR MAJOR & CAREER COUNSELING APPOINTMENT FOR FIRST TIME COLLEGE STUDENTS AND UNDECIDED STUDENTS

Whether you are undecided or have some ideas of major / career interest in mind, Mission College counselors will assist you in identify and clarify your personal, career, and academic goals by gathering information about yourself (values, interests, personality traits, abilities and skills) and guide you in the decision-making process to confirm your major/career goals.

Please complete the following to ensure that you get the most out of your one-hour counseling session.

### STEP 1: BEFORE the counseling session

1. Take FREE career aptitude and career assessments and save a copy of the results to review it with a counselor to discuss what interested you.
  - o [Career Coach](#) in MC Portal. You can answer a 6 or 60 questions survey to determine your interest code.
  - o [True Colors](#) in Eureka. Create an account using Mission College site code YIQPMHQ
2. Prepare to discuss the following questions when meeting with a counselor.
  - o What would you like to accomplish before leaving Mission College?
    - Typical academic goals include certificates, Associate Degrees, and completion of transfer requirements. Students can often complete a combination of these things.
  - o Based on the results from Career Coach and/or True Colors in Eureka, do they align with your values, interests, academic strengths and preferences?
    - The key to career satisfaction lies in being able to answer four key questions: *Who am I? Why do I want to work? What do I want to do at work? Where do I want to work?* Also, it's helpful to start thinking deeply about questions that counselor may ask during the counseling session (see below).
    - Reflect on your current and/or past relationships, jobs, experiences, etc. and analyze how they relate to the career assessment information gathered?
    - Jot down your thoughts and some questions to ask a counselor.
3. Schedule a one-hour Major & Career Counseling appointment
  - o Please be on time and bring the following items with you:
    - Unofficial High School Transcripts
    - Other College Unofficial Transcripts (if applicable)
    - Advanced Placement (A.P.) Exam Scores (if applicable)

### STEP 2: DURING the counseling session

1. Tell your story: Consider sharing information that you have discovered in "Step 1" above which might be important for counselor to know in order to help you identify the major and career paths that make sense based on the career assessment results and information being shared.
  - o Review Career Coach and / or True Colors in Eureka assessment results.
2. Counselor will ask questions to help inspire and guide you in figuring out these questions:
  - o What type of work have you done? Did you enjoy or dislike about the experience?
  - o What are your values (what you care deeply about) and how does this affect you when you are thinking about your future career and work environment?
  - o What is your financial / lifestyle that you desire?
  - o What type of volunteer or work experience do you need to have in order to make a more confident decision?
  - o What is most important to you when selecting a career or major?
3. If appropriate, the following objectives will be achieved in the one-hour appointment. Counselor will:
  - o Confirm/assign student to an MCP based on student's *primary* program of study

- Remind student to update their program of study, if needed.
- Refer student to the Career Counseling page and based on student's needs, review:
  - Step 2 - Explore Career Paths and/or
  - Step 3 – Make Career Decisions

**OR**

- If MCP cannot be assigned at this point, review the Career Paths, Steps 1 to 3, from Career Counseling page.
  - Provide “Action Plan” for student to follow through
- Review course selections and complete at least an AEP (educational plan)
- Refer student to a cohort (support services) based on eligibility and needs
- Complete notes in CC (brief summary of what took place and what to be covered in the next meeting).
- Schedule a follow up appointment for CEP (comprehensive educational plan)

**STEP 3: AFTER the counseling session**

1. Visit the Career Counseling page to dive deep on Step 2 - Explore Career Paths and Step 3 - Make Career Decisions
  - Write down your thoughts and questions to ask counselors in the follow up appointment.
2. Follow through with each item on the “Action Plan” provided by the counselor (if applicable).
3. Submit the online “[Program Change Request](#)” form to have accurate program of study on your record (if applicable).
4. Complete an **Orientation, self-placement** for English/ESL and Math, and **Educational Plan** by the third Thursday in March for spring or third Thursday in October for fall to receive [priority registration](#) which qualifies you for an earlier date to enroll in classes (if not yet done).
5. Schedule a follow up counseling appointment, if you have not done it yet, to review the following items:
  - Decide on a major/career to complete a comprehensive educational plan (CEP) **and / or**
  - Evaluate your options and explore further to make informed decisions on what careers you want to pursue.
6. Continue meeting with counselors every semester to ensure you reach your goals in an efficient manner.
  - If possible, make an informed decision on major/career and have a CEP by the end of the first year.
  - Work with counselors on how to conduct informational interviews and to find ways to get involved to develop skills and gain experiences while working toward your goals.