

**ROSE  
STATE  
COLLEGE**

# Every Student is Undecided:

Helping Students Navigate College  
and How to Choose a Major



**R A I D E R S**

**Travis Lightsey, Director of Career Development**

# Learning Objectives

## What We'll Cover:

- The work we do with students.
- Research and theory on indecision among college students.
- The decision-making process.
- How to utilize this information with your students.



**R A I D E R S**



# Mission at OU

**The Center for Major & Career Exploration serves as the University's central unit in helping students gain academic clarity about their major and/or initial career options. Our mission is to empower students to attain purpose through self-knowledge, provide resources for students to be confident in their decision making, and create a foundation for their academic and professional success**



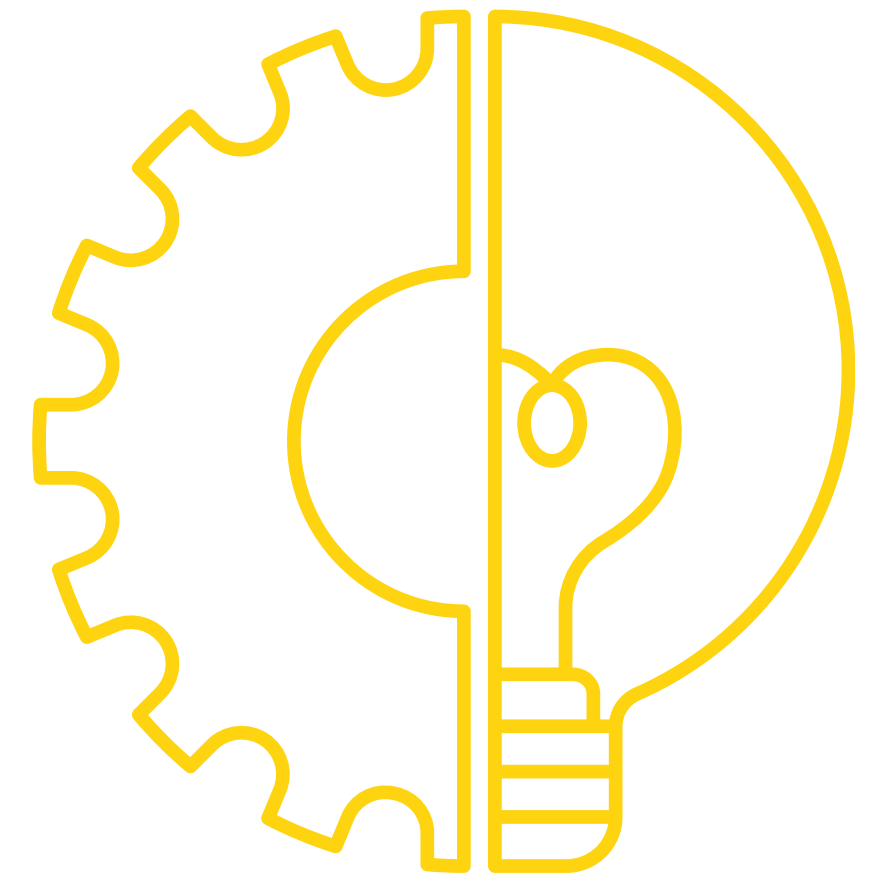
# Mission of Rose

The mission of Rose State College Career Services is to help students achieve their career goals. This may start with personal self-discovery, addressing “What might I want to do?” Often it involves exploring career options, connecting interests with the world of work, prototyping careers, and creating career goals that provide focus and purpose. We help with all aspects of your job search as well!

**Transactional**



**Transformational**



# OUR PROCESS

## **UNDERSTANDING SELF**

Students learn about their values, interests, skills, and personality. They also identify their source of indecision.

## **EXPLORATION OF & NARROWING DOWN OPTIONS**

Students learn more about majors, career paths through the use of resources.

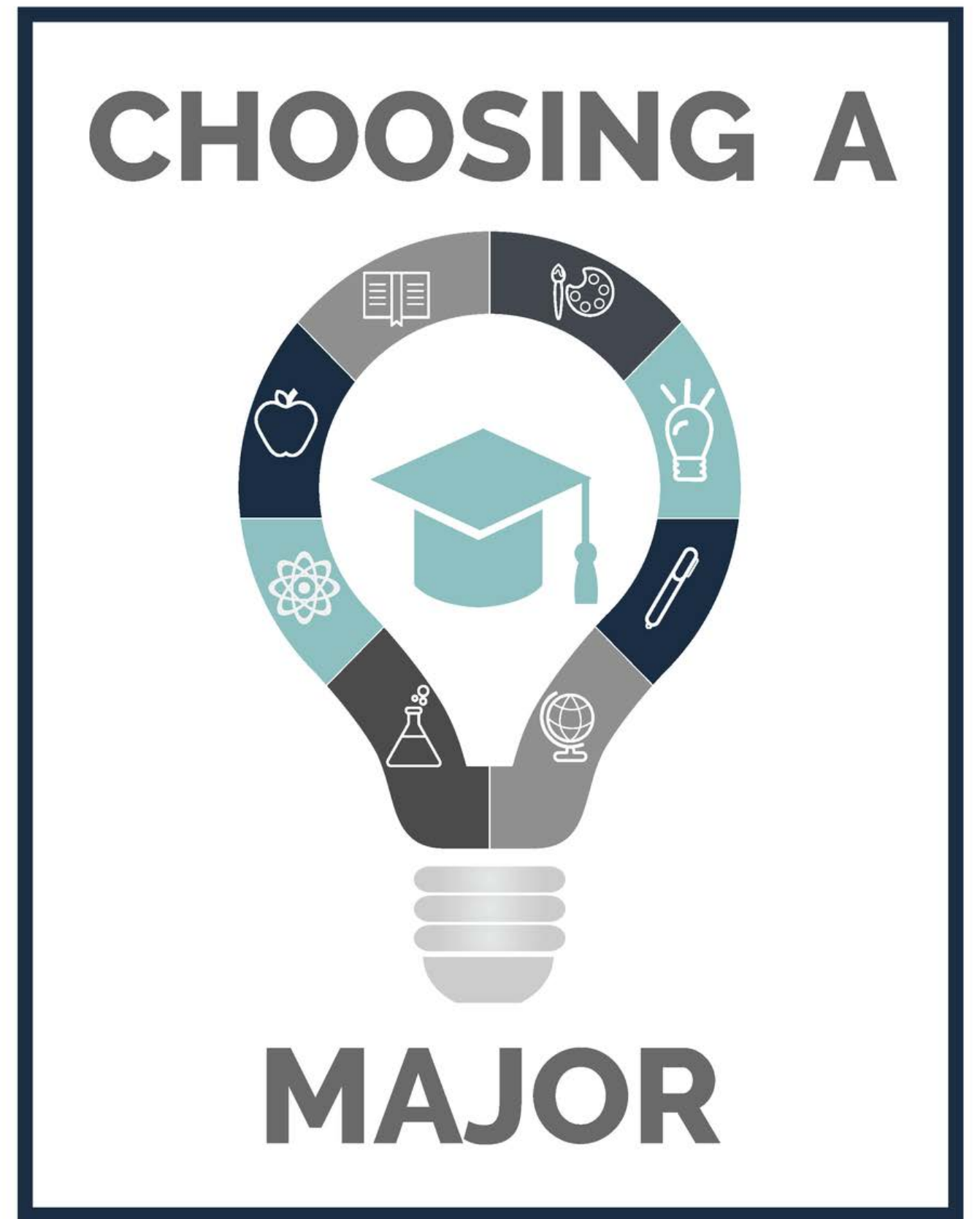
## **TAKING ACTION**

Students are equipped to make a decision about a major or career.

# Exploration Workbook

Used in tandem with first year success courses or  
alone as an independent, self-paced tool.

Entire process of understanding self, decision-  
making, exploring options, narrowing down  
options, and creating an action plan.



 UNIVERSITY COLLEGE  
MAJOR AND CAREER EXPLORATION  
*The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA*

ROSE STATE COLLEGE



Students understand their values, interests, skills, personalities, and abilities

Students understand post-secondary options and their connection to occupations and career fields

Students understand how to identify and utilize credible resources for career selection

Students identify appropriate action steps for selecting and affirming career path



## Common Decision-Making Strategies

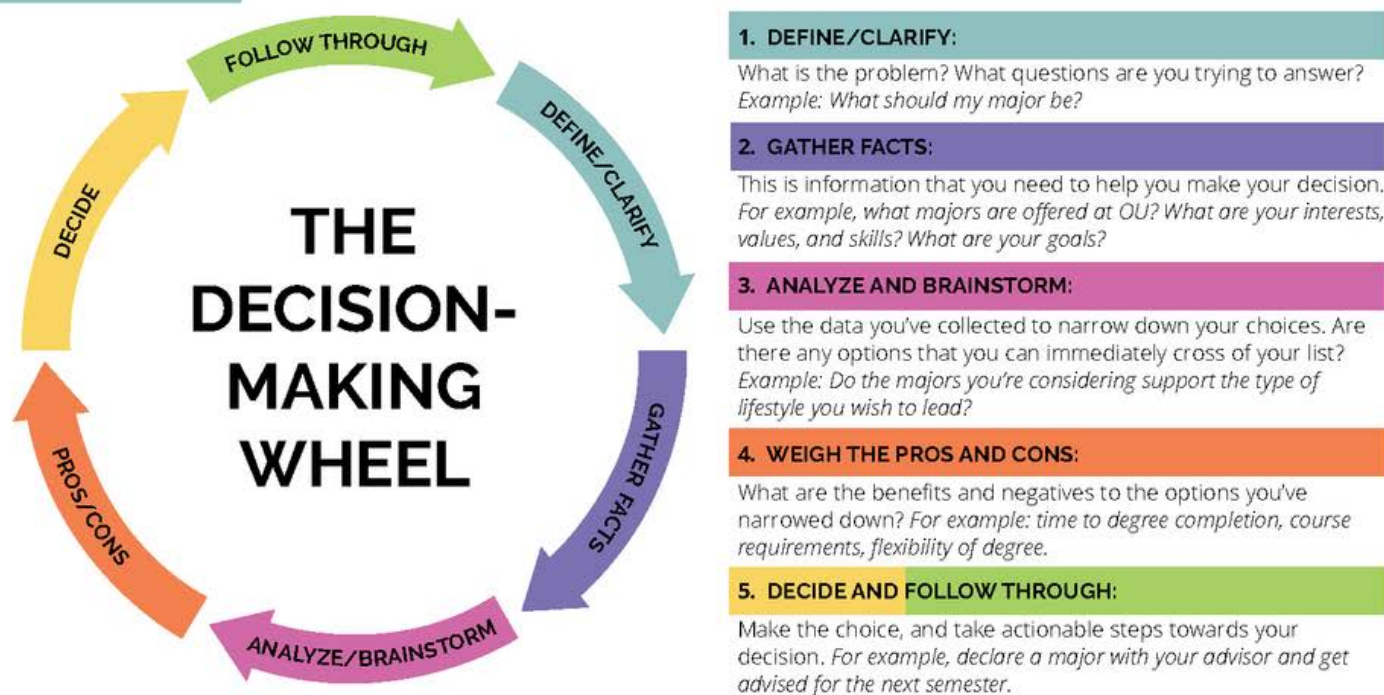
While the ability to make decisions is an important skill to have, perhaps even more important is the way that you approach a decision. Below you will find types of decision-making strategies that people may use. (Dinklage, 1967). As you read below, think about the type of decision-making strategy that you tend to utilize the most.

- *Impulsive*: Do you tend to put little thought or examination into your decision? Do you choose the first option without considering alternatives?
- *Fatalistic*: Do you allow your environment or situation to determine your decision? Do you leave decisions up to fate?
- *Compliant*: Do you allow someone else to decide? Do you follow someone else's idea of the best alternative for your future?
- *Delaying*: Do you tend to declare a standstill, postponing all thought and action, until you decide to implement your decision?
- *Agonizing*: Do you get lost in the factual information and get overwhelmed with analyzing alternatives?
- *Intuitive*: Do you make a choice based on a "gut" feeling about the best alternative?
- *Paralysis*: Do you accept a need to choose but cannot seem to approach your decision?
- *Planning*: Do you weigh the facts and choose the result that will be the most satisfying? Do you embark on a rational process, balancing cognitive and emotional needs?

## How to Combat Indecision

Figure 1.1 (below) is the **Decision-Making Process**. By utilizing the steps in this wheel, you can work through the decision of choosing your major. You can also apply this wheel to other big decisions that you will need to make while in college. If you struggle with one of the types of indecision that we just covered, you will more than likely find this process to be quite helpful.

**FIGURE 1.1**



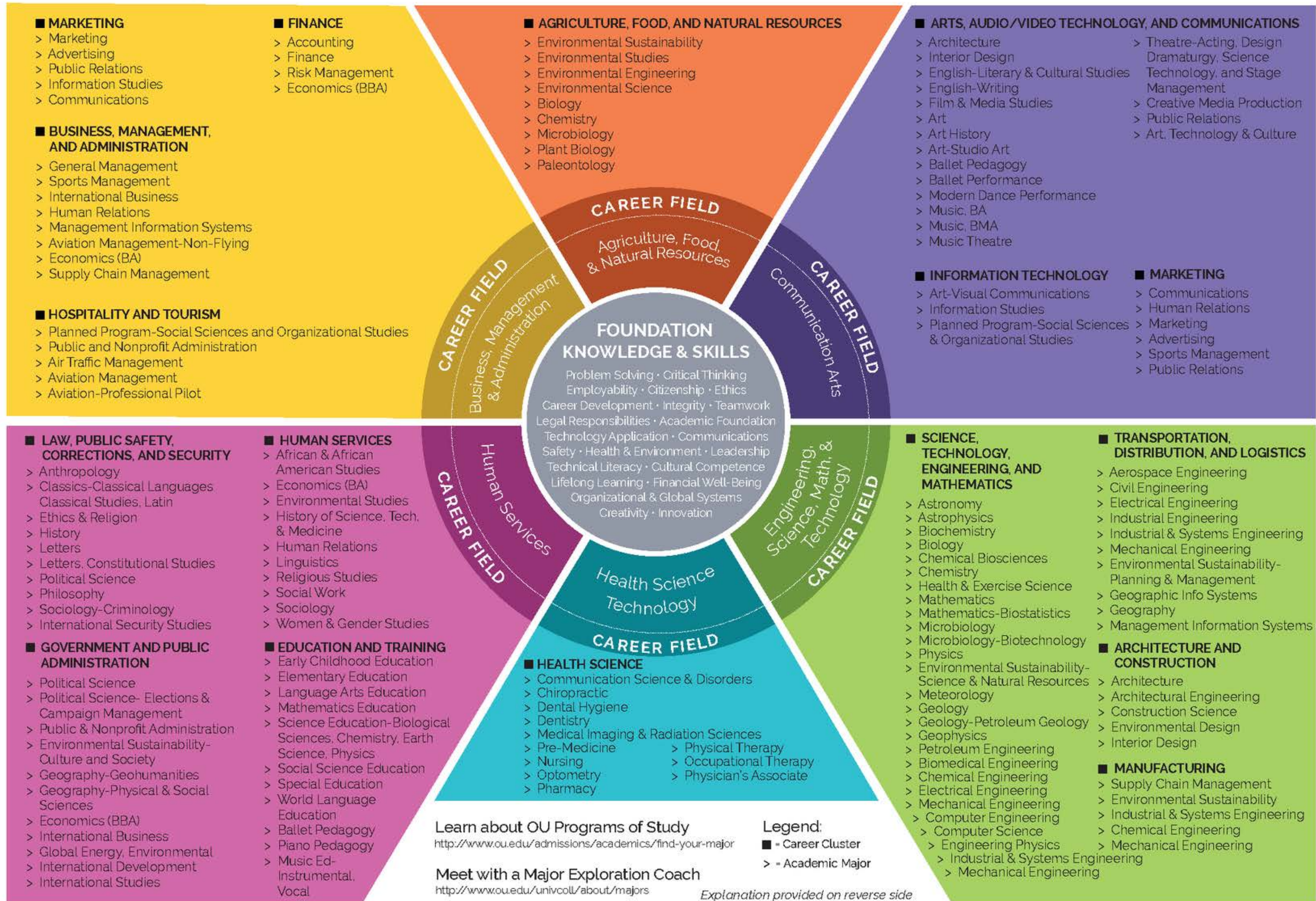
## Activity 1.1 The Decision-Making Process

Instructions: Think about an upcoming decision that you need to make. This decision doesn't necessarily have to be about choosing a major, it can be anything! Using the steps described in Figure 1.1, outline the process you would take for making your decision.

<b>1. DEFINE/CLARIFY</b>	
What is the problem? What questions are you trying to answer? <i>Example: What should my major be?</i>	
<b>2. GATHER FACTS</b>	
This is information that you need to help you make your decision. For example, what majors are offered at OU? What are your interests, values, and skills? What are your goals?	
<b>3. ANALYZE AND BRAINSTORM</b>	
Use the data you've collected to narrow down your choices. Are there any options that you can immediately cross off your list? <i>Example: Do the majors you're considering support the type of lifestyle you wish to lead?</i>	
<b>4. WEIGH THE PROS AND CONS</b>	
What are the benefits and negatives to the options you've narrowed down? For example: time to degree completion, course requirements, flexibility of degree.	
<b>5. DECIDE AND</b>	<b>FOLLOW THROUGH</b>
Make the choice, and take actionable steps towards your decision. For example, declare a major with your advisor and get advised for the next semester.	

**FIGURE 2.3**

# OU Major Map: Career Fields, Cluster, and Majors





UNIVERSITY COLLEGE  
**MAJOR AND CAREER EXPLORATION**  
 The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA

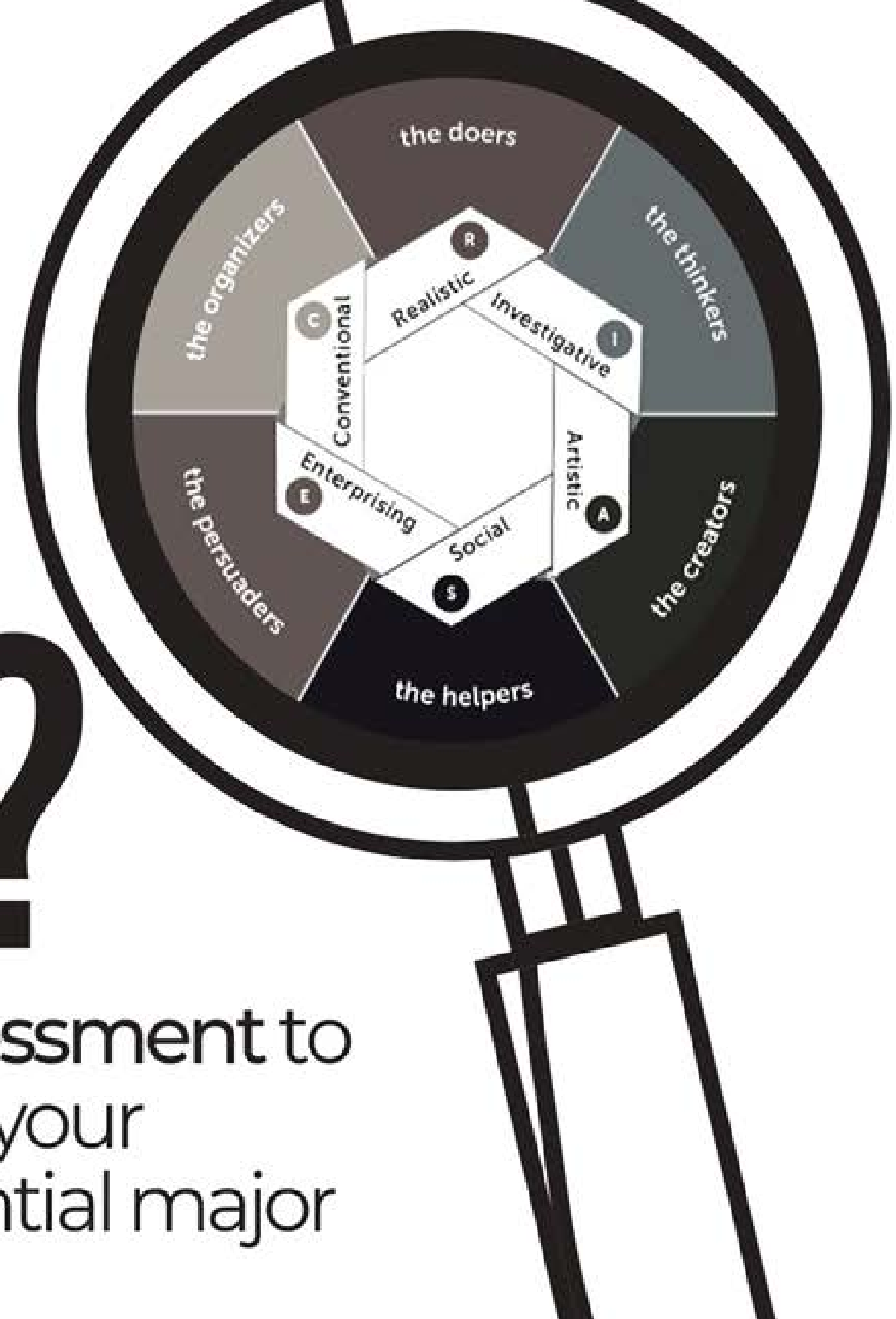
<b>Realistic – (R)</b> practical, using tools, building, providing security, hands-on	<b>Investigative – (I)</b> analyzing, research, curiosity, intellectual, explorative, problem-solving	<b>Artistic – (A)</b> creativity, expression, originality, imagination	<b>Social – (S)</b> cooperation, listening, understanding, helping	<b>Enterprising – (E)</b> selling, persuading, managing, marketing, competition	<b>Conventional – (C)</b> accuracy, stability, efficiency, data management, organization
Aerospace Engineering (I,E) Architectural Engineering (I,A) Aviation - Pilot (I,C) Aviation - Air Traffic Management (E,C) Civil Engineering (I,E) Computer Engineering (C) Construction Science (E,C) Electrical Engineering (I,C) Engineering Physics (I,C) Environmental Engineering (I) Environmental Geology (I) Environmental Science (I) Geology (I) Geophysics (I) Mechanical Engineering (I,C) Nuclear Medicine (I,S) Petroleum Engineering (I,E) Petroleum Geology (I,E) Radiography (I,S)	Anthropology (A,S) Astronomy (R) Astrophysics (R) Biochemistry (R) Biology (R) Biomedical Engineering (R) Chemical Biosciences (R) Chemical Engineering (R) Chemistry (R) Community Health (C,R,S) Economics – A&S (A,S) Environmental Studies (R,S) Environmental Sustainability (R,S) Film and Media Studies (A,E) Geographic Information Science (R,E) Geography (R,E) Health, Medicine and Society (S) Human Health and Biology (R, S) Information Science and Technology (R, C) International Security Studies (S,R) Letters: Constitutional Studies (E,S) Mathematics (R,E) Microbiology (R) Paleontology (R) Physics (R) Plant Biology (R) Pre-Dentistry (R,S) Pre-Medicine (S,R) Pre-Pharmacy (S,C) Pre-Physician's Associate (S,R) Pre-Veterinary Medicine (R,S) Psychology (S,E) Public Health (C,R,S) Sociology: General (S,E) Criminology (S,R)	Arabic (I,S) Architecture (I,R) Art (R) Art: Art, Technology, & Culture (R,I,E) Art: Studio Art (R,I,E) Art: Visual Communication (R,I,E) Art: Art History (I,E) Chinese (I,S) Classics: Classical Languages (I,S) Classics: Latin (I,S) Classics: Classical Studies (I) Creative Media Production (R,S,E) Dance (R,E) Drama (E,S) English: Literary & Cultural Studies (S, I) English: Writing (I,E) Environmental Design (I,R) Ethics and Religion (I,S) French (I,S) German (I,S) Interior Design (R,S) Italian (I,S) Japanese (I,S) Journalism (I,S) Letters (I) Linguistics (I,S) Music (I,R) Musical Theatre (E,S) Philosophy (I,S) Professional Writing (I,S) Russian (I,S) Spanish (I,S)	African and African-American Studies (I,A) Communication (I,E,A) Communication Disorders: Speech Pathology: Audiology (I,A) Dental Hygiene (R) Early Childhood Education (A,E) Elementary Education (A,E) Health and Exercise Science (R, I) History (I,E) History of Science (I) Human Relations (E,I) International and Area Studies: Asian, European, Latin American, Middle Eastern (A,I) Judaic Studies (I,A) Language Arts Education (A,I) Latinx Studies (I, A) Mathematics Education (A,I) Music Education (A,I) Native American Studies (I,A) Nursing (I,R,E) Pre-Occupation Therapy (R,I) Pre-Physical Therapy (R,I) Radiation Therapy (R,I) Religious Studies (A,E) Science Education (I,R) Social Studies Education (A,I) Social Work (E,A) Special Education (I,A) Women's and Gender Studies (I,E) World Language Education (A,I)	Advertising (A,S) Aviation Management (C,R) Economics – Business (C,S) Energy Management (C,R) Entrepreneurship and Venture Management (S,C) International Business (S,I) Management (C,S) Marketing (S,C) Political Science (I,S) Public & Nonprofit Administration (S,C) Public Relations (A,S) Sports Management (S,R) Supply Chain Management (R,C)	Accounting (R,I) Computer Science (I,R) Finance (E,I) Industrial Engineering (I, E) Information Studies (I,E) Management Information Systems (E,I) Meteorology (E,S) Risk Management (E,S)

For more information about these majors, visit [checksheets.ou.edu](https://checksheets.ou.edu) or [catalog.ou.edu/courses.html](https://catalog.ou.edu/courses.html)

Is your future  
career plan

# SUPER STRONG?

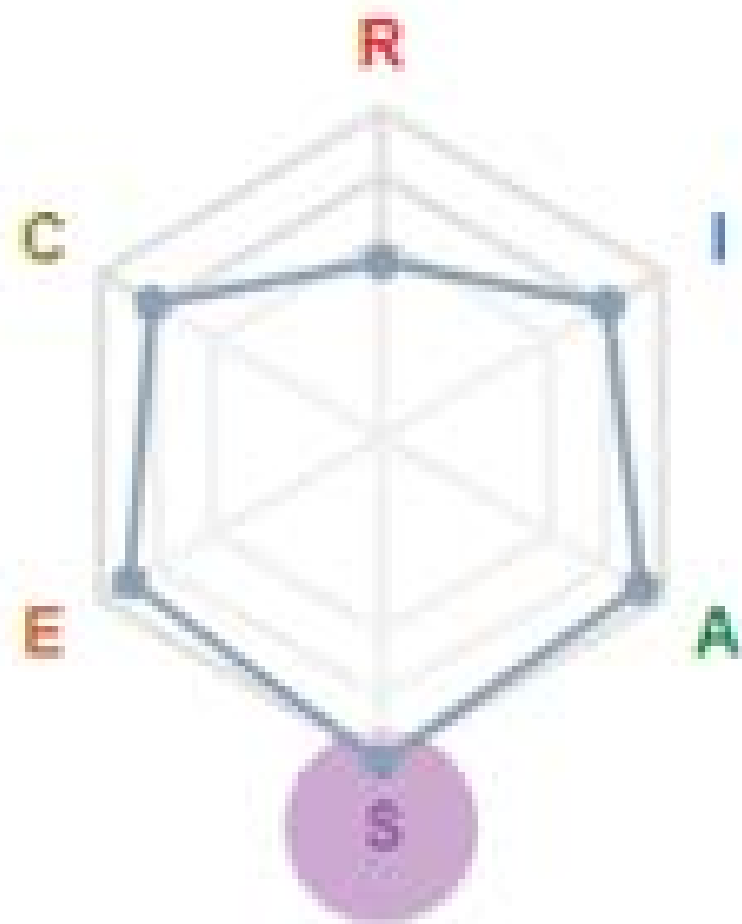
Take the SuperStrong® assessment to help you understand where your interests intersect with potential major and career pathways!



The SuperStrong helps students identify their interests and extends their understanding of how interests can support academic and career success with up-to-date data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), and Occupational Information Network (O\*NET).

## YOUR SUPERSTRONG INSIGHTS

Click on **R-I-A-S-E-C**



### SOCIAL

People who enjoy helping others, teaching, and providing care or advice for others. They are often cooperative, generous, and understand the point of view of others. They value social interaction and relationship building.

WHY WE CARE

52%

OF COLLEGE STUDENTS CHANGE  
THEIR MAJOR DURING THEIR FIRST  
YEAR OF COLLEGE

ROSE STATE COLLEGE

WHY WE CARE

80%

OF ADULTS ARE IN A CAREER NOT  
DIRECTLY RELATED TO THEIR  
BACHELOR'S DEGREE

(Copelin, 2012)

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**WHY WE CARE**

**80%**

**OF ADULTS ARE IN A CAREER NOT  
DIRECTLY RELATED TO THEIR  
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**CRITICAL DECISIONS ARE BEING  
MADE AT ALL STAGES OF LIFE**

**ROSE STATE COLLEGE**



**Decision-Making is one of the most important skills to learn.**



**Decision-Making is one of the most important skills to learn.**

FOR US, EVERY STUDENT IS  
UNDECIDED.

ROSE STATE COLLEGE

# Research in Cognitive & Developmental Psychology

**GORDAN & KINE, 1989**

Students view their personal  
decisions as a reflection of their identity.

The choices they make in college will influence  
the person they hope to become in the future.



# Research in Cognitive & Developmental Psychology

**GORDAN & KINE, 1989**

Students view their personal  
decisions as a reflection of their identity.

The choices they make in college will influence  
the person they hope to become in the future.

This causes a **LOT OF STRESS AND ANXIETY.**



# Research in Cognitive & Developmental Psychology

**GALOTTI, TANDLER, & WIENER, 2014**

Students tend to consider more than one option at a time, but didn't do enough research on the options because they were overwhelmed.

This lead to superficial decision-making.

Study showed the more time and dedication a student gave towards considering their options, they became more likely to narrow down the number of options they were considering, and became more confident with their choice.

**ROSE STATE COLLEGE**



# Research in Cognitive & Developmental Psychology

## LILLIAN DINKLAGE'S (1968) TAXONOMIES

Dinklage found that people tend to develop "trait-like" differences, or decision-making styles, in how they approach the process of making decisions.

Decision-making styles stay consistent through different types of decisions being made.



**What types of decisions do your students tend to struggle with?**



What types of decisions  
do your students tend  
to struggle with?

*Share out!*





# Decision-Making

**WHAT'S THE HARDEST  
DECISION YOU'VE MADE  
TODAY?**

# Choose a side



BACON & EGGS



PANCAKES

# Choose a side



BACON & EGGS  
MORNING



PANCAKES  
NIGHT

# Choose a side



BACON & EGGS

MORNING

LIKED



PANCAKES

NIGHT

RESPECTED

# Choose a side



BACON & EGGS

MORNING

LIKED

LOW-PAYING JOB YOU LOVE



PANCAKES

NIGHT

RESPECTED

HIGH-PAYING JOB YOU DISLIKE

# Choose a side



BACON & EGGS

MORNING

LIKED

LOW-PAYING JOB YOU LOVE

FOLLOW YOUR PASSION



PANCAKES

NIGHT

RESPECTED

HIGH-PAYING JOB YOU DISLIKE

FOLLOW SUCCESS

# DECISION-MAKING STYLES

DINKLAGE, 1968

## PLANNING

Do you weight the facts and choose the result that will be the most satisfying? Do you embark on a rational process, balancing cognitive and emotional needs?

## AGONIZING

Do you get lost in the factual information and get overwhelmed with analyzing alternatives?

## IMPULSIVE

Do you tend to put little thought or examination into your decision? Do you choose the first option without considering alternatives?

## FATALISTIC

Do you allow your environment or situation determine your decision? Do you leave decisions up to fate?

## PARALYSIS

Do you accept a need to choose but cannot seem to approach your decision?

## INTUITIVE

Do you make a choice based on a "gut" feeling about the best alternative?

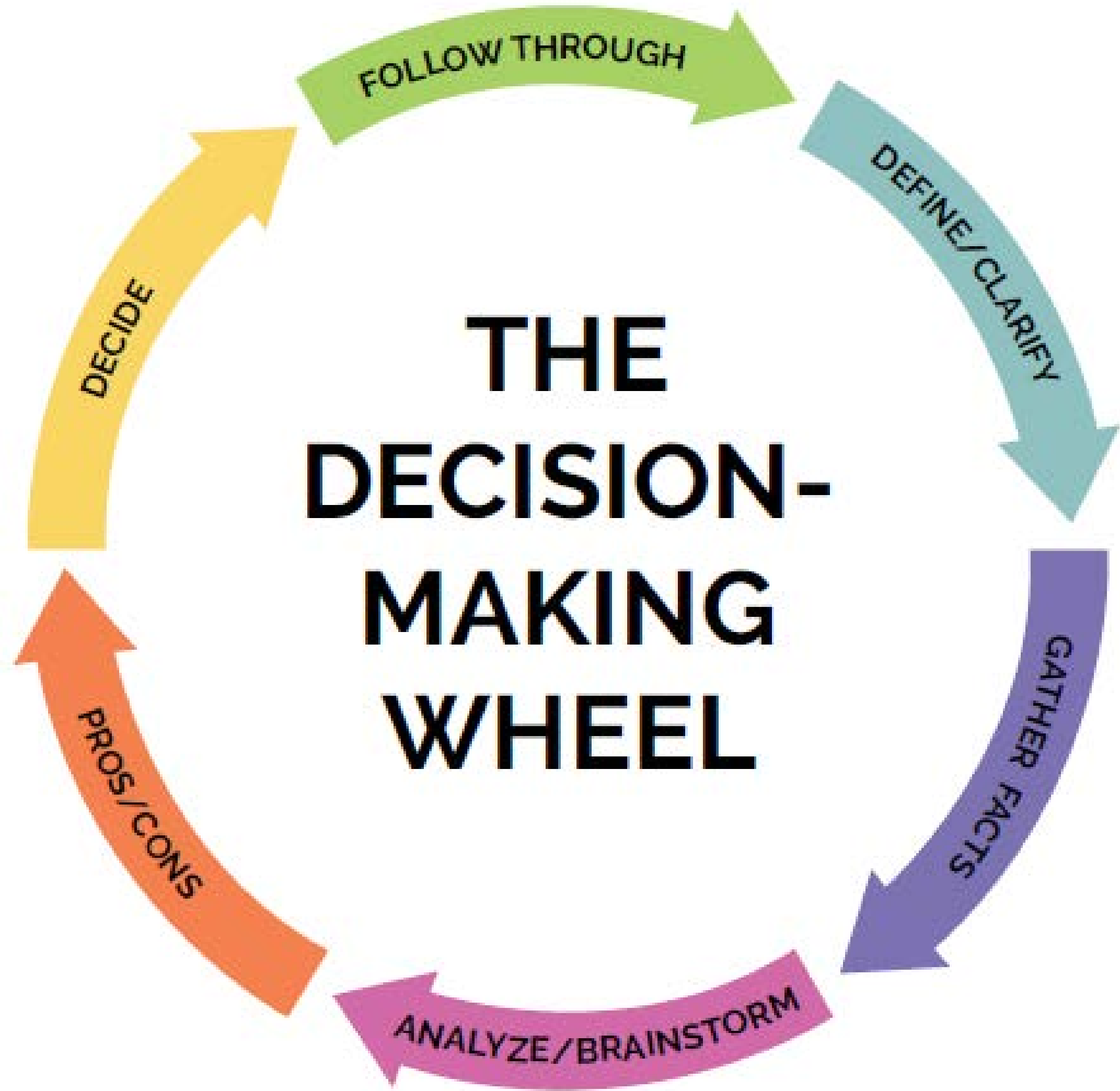
## COMPLIANT

Do you allow someone else to decide? Do you follow someone else's idea of the best alternative for your future?

## DELAYING

Do you tend to declare a moratorium, postponing all thought and action, until you decide to implement your decision?

# DECISION- MAKING PROCESS





# How To Utilize With Your Students

## UNDERSTANDING

*What is the choice to be made?*  
*What is the cause/root of indecision?*

Help student address their indecision and where it's stemming from.

What decision-making style are they utilizing?

## COACHING

Walk students through decision-making process by empowering them to seek out answers, and offering support when needed.

## PROVIDING RESOURCES

- Establishment of Goals
- Identification of Action Steps
- Additional Research
- Provide Connections or Networking

# Conclusion

## WHAT WE COVERED TODAY:

- The work we do with students.
- Research and theory on indecision among college students.
- The decision-making process.
- How to utilize this information with your students.

WRAPPING UP!



**QUESTIONS?  
COMMENTS?**

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