

Career Vision 20/20: Love Your Major: The Sweet Spot Method

Hello Wake Techians! It's February and I smell love in the air! Not only is it the month of Valentine's Day, it is also Love Your Major Month. So before you go out there and get those flowers and candy for the one you love. I have a question for you. Do you love your major? Do you love the career you are preparing for? As a Career Coach, one of the most frequent questions I get when I meet with students is "Mr. Tucker, how do I find a major or a career that I love? How do I find the right career for me? Well the answer to that questions is at the intersection of your greatest Strengths, what you value and enjoy doing most, and what the world will pay you to do. I don't want you to miss that so let me say it again. The major and career that you love is at the intersection of (1) your greatest Strengths, (2) what you value and enjoy doing most, and (3) what the world will pay you to do. At Career and Employment Resources, that place where those three factors overlap, we call that place your Sweet Spot. So let's take a deeper dive into that! Again, your Sweet Spot is where (1) Your greatest strengths meets with (2) What you value and enjoy doing most, and (3) What the world will pay you to do. Your Greatest Strengths! To find a Major or Career you love, first you have to identify your greatest strengths. Your strengths include you hard skills and your innate and inborn talents and abilities. They are those things that you find easy to do that others find difficult to do. Some people work good with their hands. Some people just have an incredible knack for numbers or Science. Math and Science comes easy to them while others struggle. Some people can walk into a room and say put the curtains there, put the pictures over there, and place the sofa here. And it looks beautiful. That's their talent. That's their Super Power. So start with asking yourself the question "what is the one thing that I do better than anyone else?" What are the two or three things that you do best? Writer Zora Neal Hurston wrote, "There are years that ask questions, and there are years that answer." You might want to look back at your life from when you were a little child and ask yourself "what were the messages people gave me as a child that reveal clues of my special abilities?" If I were to interview someone who knows you best right now, what would they say that you do best? What are the top 2 to 3 things that you do best? Write them down. Are you good at working with your hands? Have you been told you are a good cook? Do people call you when they want to decorate an event? Former psychologist Abraham Maslow once wrote "A writer must write, a painter must paint, and a musician must make music if he or she to be ultimately at peace with themselves. In other words, follow your talents. What are your greatest strengths? Students with more work experience might find this question easier to answer. However, if you are a student with limited work exposure, your academic records may give us some indication of where you strengths lie. I also recommend that you visit Career & Employment resource's Career Lens Lab to schedule an appointment with one of our Career Coaches to set up a career assessment to uncover your greatest strengths. The Next Question you need to answer in order to find a major or career that you love is "What do you value and enjoy doing most? So exactly what do you value most? Is it helping others? Is it working with animals? Is it using your creativity? Is it working outdoors and being close to the environment? In other words, what causes are most important to you? And, what particular type of work in that cause would be meaningful to you most? This is an important question because if it is meaningful to you it will provide fulfillment. Another way to answer this question is to ask yourself "What are you passionate about? I once spoke to a student who was in the Associate of Fine Arts program playing his guitar outside on the campus grounds. I said TaShawn, "I didn't know you were into music!" He looked at me straight into the eyes and said, "Mr. Tucker, I'm not into music... music is in me!" So my question is what is in you? You can't have a major or

career you love if it doesn't involve doing something you are passionate about. Right! Causes that you truly value or are deeply passionate about will motivate you to wake up early in the morning, or stay up late at night to pursue. So take some time take a deep dive into yourself and write down all the things that you enjoy doing, are passionate about, and care about most. Now when utilizing the Sweet Spot Method, we look at all the majors and all the occupations that match your greatest strengths and all the majors and occupations that match the things you value and enjoy doing most... and we look at where they overlap. And where they overlap, we call that your sweet spot. Now this is important, so I really need you to hear this. Within your sweet spot are multiple majors, multiple occupations, and multiple careers that might be perfectly right for you for you to consider. So your next step is to analyze each occupation. Looking at what the occupation entails, and asking yourself, "would I enjoy doing this work?" You already know you have the innate ability to pursue this occupation. It's just about confirming that you are interested and willing to pursue that occupation. Clarity gives us Confirmation. And to help you gain more clarity in finding a major or career you can love, Career & Employment Resources has tons resources to allow you to take a deeper dive into each one of your Sweet Spot occupations. You can even look at videos of the day in the life of each occupation to see if this is an occupation that resonates with you! And once we identify the occupation that resonates with your greatest strengths and what you value and enjoy doing most we can identify the academic major that will get you there. But there is one other final question we need to answer in order to find the major or career you can love. What would the world pay you to do? And I can hear some parents in back saying "You tell them Mr. Tucker!" Let's face it. If you find something you are good at and something you value most and would enjoy doing. But if no one will pay you to do it, it's not a job or a career, it's just a hobby. Now don't get me wrong. There is nothing wrong with having a hobby. We all should have a hobby as an source of balance and an outlet for something you enjoy doing in your spare time. However, you still have to pay the bills. You still have to support yourself and your family. So this brings us to the third major question in our Sweet Spot. And the question is which one of these occupations has the greatest ROI, or which one will give you the greatest return on your investment? What will the world or your particular market pay you to perform this occupation in your area? And what is the projected outlook for that occupation or that major, in this area? And with that you have to look at... what is the demand of the particular career in this region or your region of interest. For example, Anthropology might be an interesting major, but the question is can I find a job in that industry in this area? I might be interested in Marine Biologist, but what is the demand for Marine Biologists in this area? So you want to find out your Major's ROI. What is your return on investment if I choose that major? Or, am I willing to relocate to an area where that occupation is in demand? These are some important questions. Through Career & Employment Resources we have several effective tools to research the salaries and employment projections and demands for specific occupations in our area. There really is a major and a career you can love out there. And lies at the intersection between your greatest strengths, what you value and enjoy doing most, and what the world will pay you to do. Let us show you how the Sweet Spot Method can help you find a love connection what you do best and what you love most. Contact one of our career coaches to help you answers those three important questions that will lead you on a career path to a career you will love. Our Career Coaches will take you through a three-step process to help you find the major or career that is the best fit for you. We will start with a Self-Assessment to answer the questions, what are my greatest strengths? And what do you value and enjoy doing most? Next we will navigate you through career exploration by looking at you sweet spot to determine, based on your skills, values and interest, what is the best possible

occupations or possible careers that are aligned with your greatest strengths, what you value and enjoy doing most, and what this region will pay you to do. And finally, we help you develop a career action plan outlining a career path with the appropriate major, certificate, diploma or degree program that will lead you to your sweet spot occupation or career that you will love. I invite you to trust the process. It really works! Go to careers.waketech.edu and schedule an appointment with one of our Career Coaches today! This is Career Coach Larry Tucker wishing you a safe and enjoyable February. And encouraging you to use your greatest strengths, to do the things you value and love most. In other words "Love Your Major!"