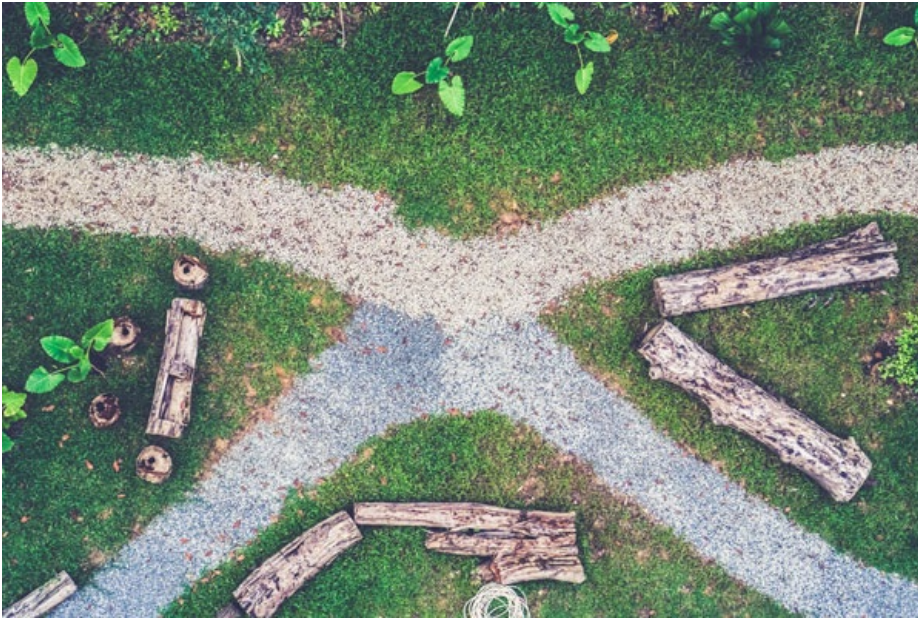


EXPLORE YOUR OPTIONS IN COLLEGE TO FIND THE BEST CAREER PATH

Summary: *Your college years are meant to be a period of exploration and discovery. Take advantage of it.*



Question: I am going to school for my associate's liberal-arts degree. I am having a tough time deciding what career path to take. I went through two semesters in nursing and decided it wasn't right for me. I don't want to jump into anything too quickly, as I did with nursing. Do you have any suggestions on how to explore more career options?

Answer: As frustrating as it must have been for you to discover, two semesters in, that nursing wasn't for you, don't give up the search. You are actually on the path that many career counselors would advise getting experience and testing the waters before you graduate.

Sometimes it is easier to identify and eliminate areas that you aren't particularly interested in before settling on a career direction. Remember: it isn't the experience itself but the learning from the experience that is the best teacher. Rather than view your two semesters as a waste of time, consider the specific qualities and conditions that you were able to identify that you know now to avoid in a career and work environment.

To further your exploration, make the most of time and resources both in and out of the classroom. Look through the course catalog and meet with your adviser to put together a schedule that will allow you to creatively sample topics across disciplines while still continuing to meet curriculum requirements. For greater insight, meet individually with each of your professors in fields of interest to you, and ask them about potential career opportunities, along with the upsides and downsides of these professions.

Beyond that, research careers on the Internet, in the library, and through your college's career services department. Take advantage of every career event and visiting speaker sponsored by the college to hear first-hand accounts. As you begin to focus again on one or two interest areas, carve out opportunities for real-life experience. Volunteering, shadowing or working on an internship will help to affirm your decision or send you back for more exploration.

- See [How to Open Your Eyes to the Right Career Opportunities for You](#) for more information.