

What's The Major For You?

(NAPSA)—Which college majors are hot—and which schools offer them? These are important questions that students should answer before they apply to a school.

A major is often considered hot because the demand for workers exceeds the supply—or will in the near future.

For example, employment in information systems design and related services is expected to grow 40 percent in the decade ending in 2014, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Computer and mathematical science occupations are projected to be adding 967,000 jobs.

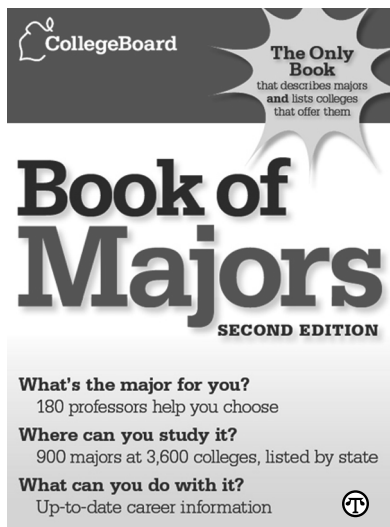
Another high-growth area is education. Hundreds of thousands of elementary and high school teachers are expected to retire in the next 10 years, opening the way for recent graduates. Demand will be especially strong for teachers who are bilingual in Spanish, or who have undergraduate degrees in math or science.

Other hot majors this year include Near and Middle Eastern studies, biotechnology, health professions (such as nursing and pharmacy), Chinese and neuroscience.

Deciding on your major is just the first step. You then need to find out what the major will require in terms of courses, what schools offer that major and exactly what they have to offer.

Fortunately, a new edition of a trusted guide can make the selection process easier.

“Book of Majors” (The College Board, \$24.95), a comprehensive guide to academic programs offered at four-year and two-year colleges, describes 190 of the most popular college majors in depth; how they are taught, what the requirements are, what courses students can expect to take, career options and employment prospects.



Once you decide on a major, you may want to find out just what's involved and which schools offer that major.

These profiles are followed by a directory of 900 majors at 3,600 colleges, showing which colleges offer each major and at what degree level—from associate to Ph.D.

Among other things, the book provides questions a student who is interested in a particular major should ask a college about its program.

For example, if you're interested in majoring in astronomy, you may want to find out about the campus's observatory and computer labs. Can undergraduates use the largest telescope? Is there a digital camera on the telescope? What opportunities are available for undergraduates to participate in research or independent study?

“Book of Majors” was recently updated to a second edition, which features 10 new in-depth profiles, recent career trends information and completely updated college listings.

The guide is available wherever books are sold.