



Major not quite right? Create one!

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General Engineering: Human-centric Design
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Receiving the first copy of my four year plan on orientation day was overwhelming but straightforward. I simply needed to complete the checklist of classes for the Computer Science and Engineering major. Problems started to arise when I had to decide whether this major was really the path I wanted to take or whether I wanted to forge my own.

I decided to switch majors, and I will preface my decision with the clarification that neither path is wrong. It is a common misconception that your major dictates your career, but thanks to the internet's plethora of educational resources, career mobility is easier than ever. Though different paths to the same job and field can exist, obtaining a related college degree remains the socially preferred method. Since I want to go into a relatively new field -- Human Computer Interaction (HCI) -- I chose to pivot now rather than post-graduation. When I question my choice, I think back to Drahmann Center advisor Jeremy Wang's advice, "It seems you already know what you are doing, but you want someone to reassure you it's okay."

“Just because the solution has not been created does not mean it doesn't exist.”

Currently, SCU doesn't offer an HCI major, and though this initially felt like a problem, it has led me to discover many opportunities. Though SCU offers the option of creating an independent study major, after

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talking to different students and seeking advice from the Department Chair, Dr. JAK, I chose to create my own concentration through General Engineering instead. I met with various professors and students that were equally reassuring and challenging. Some engineering faculty reasonably warn of the problems of potentially sacrificing technical skill, but for my goal of going into multidisciplinary startup life, making my own concentration in Human-centric Design is a nice balance of flexibility and structure. You see, just because the solution is not clear does not mean it doesn't exist; sometimes you have to research, create and implement it yourself.

My college career is a big investment, and so due diligence is critical. The General Engineering major, albeit non-accredited for now, allows me to obtain fundamental engineering knowledge, while expanding it across other departments within and outside of engineering, like sociology and marketing. Yes, sometimes I feel the need to reevaluate the risk of choosing a non-traditional path, but I know this is what I want to do. Seeing problems as opportunities can be intimidating, but if you know what you want to do, start exploring its feasibility. Let me reassure you, it's okay!