

Title: Choosing My Major: Individual Traits that Matter Most in Finding Future Career Paths
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Today's college students face an overwhelming amount of information to answer challenging questions. Jeopardy contestant Ken Jennings claims that overall human knowledge doubles roughly every 18 months; human knowledge is growing, making it more difficult to answer important questions. In particular, students are most troubled about finding a major. The decision has become harder to answer today since students must reflect on past experience, interests, family influences as well as pressure to enter a prestigious occupational field, such as computer science, biotechnology, or business.

Selecting a major within freshman year is crucial to successfully transfer from community college to a university. According to Irvine Valley College's (IVC) 2017 Scorecard, 43% of students take over 6 years to transfer, primary due to switching majors or completing unnecessary courses. However, the Educational Longitudinal Study of 2002 found that students who have identified a major in community college had a 53% higher chance of transferring.

To address this issue, IVC's "Effective Altruism Club" (EAC) aims to help incoming freshmen identify their major. The club hosts a peer-mentorship program where peer-mentors are second-year students who have selected a major provide insight and experience to undecided freshman. To improve the program's effectiveness, the mentors report on mentee metrics such as satisfaction in the program and major, or their past school performance. The data are then run through a data analysis model, where algorithms such as multivariate regression and principal component analysis indicate which metrics are significant predictors of successful transfer.

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